THE

# BURNING BUSH,

## OT CONSUMED.

herein, either under all deep ſenſe of wrath, hardneſs of heart, one may judge, whether he be the child of God, or not, &c.

*Itſelf, receiving full ſatisfaction, concerning the ſin againſt the holy Ghoſt.*

Peruſed by I. D. and divers other Divines.

*Secret things belong unto GOD.*

Theſſ. 5.9. *For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain ſalvation by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who died for us, that whether we wake or ſleep, we ſhould live together with him.*

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*TO ALL THOSE WHO EITHER (for not profest) shudder-beaten with the terror of the wrath of GOD, mourn in secret, under any sense of the same, or feel hardness of heart, want peace, comfort, softness, and spirit) desire grace.*

DEAR SOULS. Though I know, assuredly, that the plodding thoghts of both sorts of you, to whom I now write, useth for the most part to be rapt up; the one with the imagination of wraths all-over-turning deluge which you fear, presently to participate you (as I think) in the eternal never dying furnace of all-devouring flames: the other with seeming, substantial thoghts (grounded upon former, and present fiony impenitent effects) imagining your selves to be as sure of reprobation, as though already (assured by some Angel of the Decree) *Cains* mark hath sealed you on the forehead as sheep to the slaughter: which now so transporteth your hopeless souls beyond all limits of moderation, that you can lend your ears to hear no voice, which sounderth not of desperation, because either you think it too late, or in vain to use the means: Or that wraths over-pressing load so keepeth you down in the floods of sorrows, that you are not able to look up.

Yet could I not choose but send unto your view this little Treatise, which by GOds providence coming into my hands, only for your sakes, did now see the light: wishing that though of all others, I was least able to comfort you, yet that you might find a word in due time, which

know you shall, if you banish carnal reason, sense, curiosity, in prying into Gods Decree before you use the means, and that fast rooted natural Popery in the soul, which ever desireth to find somewhat in nature, some sense, some feeling, some goodness, wherewith to be worthy in some sort, to lay hold of Christ.

I should exceed the limits of a short Epistle, if I were able to reckon up the free proclamations of the Book of God in all which, Christ in the act of apprehending him, tyeth you unto no condition, but freely to take and lay hold. It may be you will object, that he calleth the weary and laden, and so you say, you are not. But to leave that question, whether you are laden or not: and who must be Judge (since, for the most part, in temptation you belly your selves?) Who knoweth not that Christ in that place, rather encourageth such to come, then precisely showeth that only those who feel such a burden, must and can come, and lay hold? O that you were not thus injurious to the peace of your souls, so much to rely upon sense, and feeling, so much debasing the strength and glory of Faith, which many time without sense, and beyond all reason, apprehendeth Christ: thus offering violence unto his Kingdom, who thus apprehended, there followeth the spirit of mourning and compassion, feeling, and other graces.

I wonder, if the devil can once fasten this temptation upon you, that you must have such and such a measure of faith, feeling and repentance, to lay hold of Christ, what measure his unmeasurable subtility will be contented with? Sur-

I am, if he may be umpire, you may be diſſolved in tears, and diſpair before he ſay, No, Your ſtrongeſt let in laying hold of Chriſt (as may be ſeen by moſt of all your objections) ariſeth from your prying into the Decree of God, to be aſſured of your election; which becauſe you cannot find (judging of your ſelves according to your former actions, and thinking God like unto you) you conclude all is in vain, you know you are reprobates, there is no hope; ſo entertaining all threatnings, and rejecting the promiſes. Of which pretended knowledge, if you ſhould be examined by God, as *Adam* was, whence thus you know your ſelves to be naked reprobates? I imagine your anſwer with his, muſt needs be, that ſatan hath deceived and deluded you ſo to think.

And indeed the truth is, that the moſt part of you look too much at the Decree of God; your meaſure of ſenſe and feeling, deſiring the aſſurance of ſalvation, as it were, at your firſt entry unto Chriſtianity; which is the glorious price and Crown, waiting for you at the end of the race, if you ſo run that you may obtain.

I know you would think him an unreaſonable ſouldier who ſhould deſire to be a Colonel, or a General the firſt year, which is not obtained without long ſervice, great valour, much watching, waking, and often hazard of life: And that your ſervant would much diſpleaſe you, in demanding his years wages before he had done a weeks work. Juſt ſo is your caſe, when at firſt you would be aſſured of your Election and Salvation, before you have done a quarter, or half your work; nay, ſometimes ſcarce begun the

same, chiefly when you refute the way of life, which is to walk in the meane, whereby only we attain the assurance of salvation.

It may be you think me a miserable comforter, thus rather to crosse you, then powrbalm into your wounds, or bewail your hardnes of heart: but would to God you were no more injurious then I, in robbing your selves of the strongest tower of your salvation: I mean of the way to lay hold on Christ for your life. For indeed so do I pity all of you, that if my soul were able, and could dissolve it self in tears for you, your sorrows would have an end: since I know such and so great is the unsupportable terror of Gods wrath, chiefly if he, leading the main battel of hostes, fight against you, as *Jeremy* speaketh in anger, in wrath, and in great indignation, that there is no creature but must sink under the same; but is the conclusions some of you draw from thence, which I aim at, and would willingly cut down by the roots, to wit, I feel no faith, therefore I have none: I never had faith, therefore I shall never have any: My former actions have been hypocritical, therefore I am damned: My feeling is lost, therefore I shall never have it again: I never had feeling or sense of Gods love, therefore I shall never have any: God is angry, therefore he will never be appeased: The Sun shineth not, therefore it will never shine: It is night, therefore it will never be day: The heart was never moved, therefore it shall, and never can be moved: I have thus and thus long heard the Word, and it hath not renewed, nor moved me no more then a stone, therefore it shall, and can-

not, for such a heart is immovable: I am dead in sin, therefore I can never be alive: God is gone, therefore he will never come again: The means harden me more and more, therefore I will never hear no more: I cannot bring my heart in temper to joyn with my voice in prayer, therefore it is in vain to bring words unto God, offering outward submissive obedience: I cannot pay one ten thousand pounds which I owe him, therefore I will pay him never a penny: I cannot do all I should, therefore I will do nothing: God never loved me, therefore he will never love me: I cannot repent, nor ever could, therefore I neither can, nor shall: God in the terror of wrath appeareth my enemy, therefor he will never have mercy, &c. with a number of the like absurdities: the very naming whereof, may be more then confutation sufficient to any reasonable creature not infected with the like folly.

But speak now (though I grant unto you all your grounds, many of which for the most part are false lies) why may not you hope to escape, as well as others before you? Who delivered *David, Job, Joseph, Moses, Daniel, &c.* from dangers, terrors of soul, the devil, imprisonment, drowning, and Lyons den? But you say, that you are in the furnace of his wrath. And with the three children, may you not be delivered out of this fiery furnace? God is the same as the Prophet speaketh, even in wrath remembers mercy: therefore why may not you burn, or at least seem to burn with fire, and not be consumed, since his mercies are over all his works, he only knowing what he hath decreed

And you who are for the preſent bound up in the hardneſs of heart; in the Name of God, I beſeech you, let never this voice of deſperation come from you again: *All is in vain, there remaineth no hope.* What, is it poſſible, no hope? is God in Heaven, who is wonderful in all his works, and doth abundantly above all that we are able to think or ſpeak; and ſo long dare any little worm or piece of clay, a little more, nay not ſo much, in regard of him who is al in al, to ſay there is no hope? Ho! there remaineth always hope ſo long as we breath. For you know (as the Apoſtle ſpeaketh) *Hope that is ſeen, is no hope: for how can a man hope for that which he ſeeth?* So that hope above hope, is hope indeed. O hope ſtill to ſpeed, as well as any hard-hearted who ever were called, as al have been before calling. When then after effectual calling, you look upon *Davids* ſecure ſleep, and *Salomons* ſtrong hard-hearted declining from the ways of God, with the wonderful and hard-hearted impiety of *Manaſſes*, before calling; and the exceeding mercies of God unto them and diverſe in our age, with the good thief called home at the laſt hour: O learn to have a good conceit of God. It was, you know, the firſt thing that encouraged the prodigal ſon to come home unto his father, becauſe he had a good conceit of him. Therefore think you with him, the heavenly Father hath received ſuch and ſuch exceeding ſinners into mercy: though I have run riot, and ſtrayed, yet have I not gone ſo far as they; or if I have, yet I will ſubmit my ſelf unto him; it may be, he will alſo be merciful unto me. But what ſhall I ſay? It is God who muſt perſwade;

ſwade *Japhet* to dwell in the tents of *Shem*. It is he who muſt caſt down, perſwade, inlighten, draw, inſtruct, teach, convert, and enlarge our hearts, that we may be lifted up, conſent, ſee, come, underſtand, be taught, converted, and run the ways of his commandments; which that he would haſten in his own good time to do, my faint, few, cold, and weak petitions, ſhall ever (to my power) beg for you. Only now, for concluſion, my earneſt requeſt unto you is, that ſince it is the cuſtom of moſt of you, either in reading the Scriptures, or any other good Book, to read until you find ſomewhat (in your judgement) againſt you, and then cloſe the Book ſuddenly, as though nothing there did belong unto you, that you would not ſo uſe this little enſuing Treatiſe: but rather, before you cenſure, to read it quite through, rejecting whatſoever herein you find contrary either to the Word of God, or experience of the faith: which if ye ſhall do, you ſhall bind me more then ever, to remain

*Yours in the All-ſufficient,*
*not-changing wonderful,*
*EMANUEL.*
I. H.

A

# A DISCOVERY OF THE Child of God, under all ſenſe of Gods moſt terrible ſeeming anger.

Scholar.

*I Rejoyce, Sir, now at length, in ſo good a time, to meet with you, whom I have of a long ſeaſon ſo earneſtly deſired to confer with, becauſe of ſome doubts, which do much diſquiet me.*

*Minister*, So do I alſo rejoyce, Sir, to ſee mine old friend; wiſhing that it would pleaſe God of his infinit mercy to make me (an unworthy inſtrument) of any comfort to you, or any of his children.

*S. What ſpeak you, Comfort, Sir? I am ſo far from being troubled, that I doubt of the foundation of Religion, and whether there be any need of comfort, or any thing to be troubled for.*

*M.* This is moſt ſtrange, that any reaſonable creature ſhould doubt of that which the whole world hath univerſally taken as granted. What mean you in ſo ſaying, that you doubt of the foundation of all?

*S. The truth is, my tortured ſoul is much perplexed, whether there be a God or not?*

*M.* Whence ariſeth this temptation?

*S. Firſt, from great and ſtrong preſumptions, that there is none. Next, in that I ſee*

moſt

Is. 28. 58. 59. 1, 15. Ps. 73. 12. 13, 14. *most part of the world to live as though there were neither heaven nor hell. Lastly, in that I see such a strange seeming confusion, the good being expressed, and the wicked escaping unpunished.*

1 Cor. 2, 14.

Ibid. *M.* The strength of temptation, and carnal reason (which I perceive to be the ground of all you alledge? can be no sufficient reasons to prove such dreams. And whereas you say, the wicked in this life escape for the most part unpunished: it rather proves (as the Scripture speaketh) that like fatted oxen, they are reserved to the day of slaughter and wrath. Yet imagine your false foolish reasons were true, what is this then which so troubleth you? Why complain you? Why do you not then live in peace, if there be no Deity?

Job 5. & 6.

Job. 20. 5. 6. & 12. 1. Ro. 30.

*S. I cannot, for I feel within me perpetual terrors & vexations, which bereave me of all manner of rest, yea, sometimes thoghts that I am deceived, that my atheistical opinions are damnable: That there is certainly somewhat (I know not what) both to be loved, honoured, and feared.*

*M.* Then strive against your temptations.

Rom. 1. 4. *S. I am not able.*

*M.* Did not your parents train you up in the foundation and knowledge of Religion?

1 Cor. 2. 5. Joh. 5. 44. & 15. 5. *S. They did, at which time me thought*

*I abounded in knowledge, faith, love, practiſe of all graces, thinking every thing to be plain and eaſie. But now like a ſhip which hath been a long time toſſed on the ſeas, without all ſight of land. I doubt whether there be any ſuch things I formerly imagined: all my former feelings, faith, repentance, love (in my ſenſe) are gone: In place whereof, I remain full of all manner of doubtings, with which, though I be not ſtruck with any extraordinary terror, yet have I extream contentments, not rejoycing in any thing.*

*M.* Certainly, there muſt be ſome cauſes of your diſcontentment, you muſt baniſh doubtings, and carnal reaſon: Believe in God, and you ſhall have eaſe.

*S. If there be a God, this is my infidelity, that I cannot believe in him, and then is my eſtate a great deal more fearful in this, that all my actions have been hypocritical, that now I find my ſelf to be given* Rev. 1. 18
*over to a hard heart, with a reprobate ſenſe, joyned with an impoſſibility to fight or ſtrive for grace, or (which is more fearful) to have no deſire to ſtrive for the ſame.* 2 Cor. 3. 3.

*M.* Before we paſs any further, let us lay this infallible foundation, that moſt Pſ. 53. 1.
certainly there is a God.

*S. My infidelity and doubting is ſuch, that I ſhall never be fully of your mind, unleſs by reaſon I be convinced of the ſame.*

*M.* There muſt be no diſputing againſt

He 1.15. gainst received grounds & principles: chiefly against this, the ground of all.

S. *Yet as you remember, I beseech you, show me some reasons, proving a Deity, or that there is a God.*

M. Nature it self fully proveth the same. 1. From the Creation: for if the world be without beginning, so is it also without ending, and so it and all therein is God, having made it endless, which were most absurd to think: but since it shall have an ending (all the creatures thereof tending to corruption) hence it followeth, that it must needs have a beginning, the Creator whereof is God. 2. The excellency of all the creatures show the same, so infinite in forms, shaps, colours, and divers dispositions, chiefly the supernatural spirit of man, not satiat with any thing in nature. 3. Man himself showeth that there is a God; for one man leadeth us to another, until by degrees we come up to the first. Here I ask; where he had his beginning? Eternal he was not, which his miserable nature so subject to alteration and change, well showeth, chiefly his dissolution (eternity and change, like light and darkness, being so directly contrary) If it be said, this change came by his fall, then I ask; Whence he fell? So still, all we can think it must lead us unto God the

Gen. 1.1. Ps. 24.

Crea-

Creator of all. 4. The well-ordered government of the world: things inferior serving still things superior, until all things joyn in mans service; show that there is also some supreme Power unto which he must obey. 5. The harmony of contrary elements, whereof all bodies do consist, so far from destroying one another, that they preserve all and agree, proveth a superior causing power. 6. The natural instinct of all Nations (rather adoring flocks, and stones, and beasts, then no Deity at all) proveth the same. 7. The conscience of all, being as it were a law against us, in giving both testimony and judgement, is a most strong proof: For it testifieth neither to men nor angels, neither feareth them. Therefore it must be God himself.

Further, would not our reason tell us by and by, if we were in some fair built ruinous Countrey, or City, that there had some people dwelt, that some hands had built the same? So may we say of this world, when we see it so replenished with so many goodly creatures, that some great power did make the same, and that must needs be God. Moreover, the place of God, proveth that there is a God: For, as one saith, every place is in regard of somewhat contained in the place. So the Earth is full of worms,

worms, and such like things: the sea containeth fishes: fair houses contain men and women; Hell it is the place for Devils; Heaven likewise must not be empty, it being the godliest of all the rest: when we look upon the same, we must needs say, that there dwels the Lord of the Countrey, there dwels God himself. Lastly, but it were too tedious, I might add how abundantly the Scriptures shew the same: as also the event of things contrary to reason, miracles, prophetyings, continual mercies of fruitful seasons, &c. which *Paul* mentioneth: punishments in this life, with strange judgements on divers wicked men, as *Herod*, &c. with the wonderful power of the Spirit, in the experience of the faithful. Further (as one observes) that no volume hath ever been written directly in confutation of the same.

*S. My mind is no less perplexed concerning the authority of the Scriptures, whether they be the word of God, or not?*

*M.* The insufficiency of these doubts may soon be shewed unto you; because, admit once that there is a God, then of necessity it will follow that he is a King of kings; and that as subordinat temporary Princes have Laws and Statutes, whereby they rule their States, so must needs the Supream Lord of all, much more have Laws and Statutes, whereby

by to govern the whole world. And these must needs be the Holy Scriptures.

S. *Perswasions are not proofs, therefore shew unto me how I may rest assured that the Scriptures are the word of God?*

M. There be many reasons to prove, yet none are powerful to perswade, unless God joyn with the same, by the effectual working of his blessed Spirit.

S. *So far as you can remember, I intreat you give me satisfaction?*

M. The antiquity, harmony, consent, sincerity, miracles, and Martyrs testimony of the Scriptures, might be sufficient proofs to satisfie any indifferent person: But if unto them we add, 1. That great general inward change which suddenly it makes in men, when but some plain sentences therefrom are dropt into their hearts, filling them with horrors, so that when the heart is thus wounded, no other medicine can comfort, or cure the same, save the same Word, when all mens eloquence will not serve the turn. 2. That great power it hath to cast down all the strong holds of sin and satan, when they joyn for destruction of the soul. 3. That humble and rich poverty thereof, that in a sober, yet lofty stile, it far surpasseth (in excellency of eloquence) all the best

Orators

Orators of the world, containing therein the foundation of all ſciences; we may reſt fully aſſured thereof. Further, our own doubtings (when ſatan and our own corruptions would perſwade us, that it is not Scripture) ſtrongly prove the truth thereof: for ſatan is a liar, and the father of lies: therefore, if it were forged, he would contend for maintenance thereof. As alſo we may ſee thoſe who muſt ſtudy and practiſe the ſame, moſt holy and wiſe. Contrarily, the others moſt prophane. It were tedious to reckon up all, how miraculouſly it hath ever been preſerved in all ages, how truly all the propheſies have been, and are accompliſhed; both in the rejected wandring of the Jews, the calling of the Gentiles, Incarnation of Chriſt, coming of Antichriſts, &c. How though it were written many years ago, it meeteth with all new ſins: How powerfully being alledged in prayer, it wreſtleth with God, offereth violence to the Kingdom, quieteth the ſoul, keepeth off judgements, and obtaineth mercies, &c. How of all other writings, this only is written in the heart: ſo that at the hour of death, when other knowledge (wholly, or in great part) vaniſheth, this is moſt freſh in our memories both for our own comfort, and inſtruction of others,

others, as in *Jacob, David, &c.* So that most certainly the Word is not from men (for our nature is contrary to it) nor from satan (seeing he raiseth up his instruments against it) therefore from God himself.

Gen. 49. 3. 1 Kin. 2. 2. 3. &c. J. 4. 24. Rom. 1. 10. Psal. 139. 6.

S. *What is God?*

*M.* God is a Spirit, Eternal, Infinite, Omnipotent, most Holy, one in Essence, but three in Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost

Isa. 66. 1. Jer. 15. 1. Lev. 19. 2. Deu. 6. 4. Mat. 28. 19

S. *What is the Essence of God?*

*M.* The Nature of God, whereby indeed God is, and doth consist.

S. *What is chiefly to be considered in the Nature of God?*

Gen. 4. 12. Exod. 14. Rev. 1. 1.

*M.* The Attributes of God.

S. *What properties are chiefly to be considered in the Nature of God, concerning his creatures?*

*M.* Two principally.

S. *Which be they?*

*M.* 1. His Mercy. 2. His Justice.

S. *What is the object of his mercy?*

*M.* Mans misery.

S. *What is the object of his justice?*

*M.* Sin.

S. *What is Sin?*

*M.* The transgression of the Law.

S. *What is the reward of sin?*

*M.* Death temporary, and eternal, both in soul and body.

S. *But how cometh it to pass that sin is thus rewarded?*

R. 9. 22. 23. Eph. 2. 4. Tit. 3. 3. 4. 5. &c. Gen. 2. 18. Ez. 18. 4.

Rom. 4. 51. Jer. 5. 4. Rom. 6. 23. 16. Gen. 2. 17.

M. By

M. By reaſon of the anger or wrath of God againſt all manner of ſin, in all manner of perſons.

S. *Is anger in God a paſſion, as it is in man? Or may we think that there is anger in God?*

M. No.

S. *How then muſt we conſider of the wrath of God?*

M. 1. His moſt juſt will, and moſt aſſured, and holy decree, in puniſhing ſin, muſt be conſidered. 2. His threatnings againſt ſin. 3. The puniſhments of ſin it ſelf.

S. *What kindleth the wrath of God?*

M. Sin.

S. *But do you think God to be in this ſort angry with all mens ſins?*

M. Yea verily, both againſt the ſins of the elect and reprobat.

S. *Why ſo?*

M. Becauſe all ſin in all perſons, is directly againſt the holineſs of his nature.

S. *Do you therefore think that the wrath of God is kindled againſt all ſin, in all men alike?*

M. No.

S. *How can that agree with the former, That God is angry with all ſins, and is not angry yet alike againſt all ſins, in all mens perſons?*

M. Becauſe that Chriſt Jeſus hath taken away that anger from the elect, ſuffe-

suffring himself that which was due unto them.

S. *Show me then how God is angry against the elect, and how against the reprobat?*

M. God is said to be angry with his elect, First, when he decreeth to chastise his sin. Secondly, when he threatneth his sin. And lastly, when he indeed (in mercy for a while) chastiseth them, for their further salvation. Deut 9.9. & 3.15. Mica 7.9.

S. *How is God said to be angry with the reprobat?* Rom 9.14 ps 78.9.

M. When in this life (according to his former decree) he punisheth them with perpetual hardness of heart, or any kind of judgement: and in the life to come, poureth out the vials of his wrath and indignation upon them for evermore. R. 4.10.11

S. *What necessity is there that the wicked should be punished for ever?*

M. Because they do bear their own sins, and the punishment due unto them, not having Christ to free them. Osa 2.12.

S. *But cannot the wicked relieve themselves?*

M. No.

S. *How so?*

M. Because not being able to satisfie the Majesty whom they have offended, they must of necessity endure his wrath for ever. ps 49.7.8.

S. *What is the reason that their sufferings cannot satisfie?*

M.

*M.* Because they are but finit creatures, not being able to satisfie that infinit offended Majesty: therefore they must suffer for evermore.

*S. What may we learn from hence?*

*M.* That it is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

*S. What lesson of comfort may we learn from it?*

*M.* That we are exceedingly bound to Jesus Christ, who hath suffered this wrath for us.

*S. How may we learn to discern & judge of the greatness of this wrath?*

*M.* Look first upon the destruction of the Angels. 2. The curse which came upon *Adam*, and his posterity for sin; The destruction which came upon the first world, by the flood. 4. The burning of *Sodom* with fire. Next, to the sending of Christ in the world, and the wrath of God poured out upon him for our sins, and the everlasting fire prepared for reprobat men and angels.

*S. What should we learn from hence?*

*M.* Three things; 1. To consider seriously of the greatness of the wrath of God. 2. Not to presume of mercy. 3. Warily to flee to, and eschew sin by all means, lest we fall into the hands of the living God.

*S. How may we know when the wrath of the living God is coming?*

*M.* First

*M.* First, when the word of God wakeneth not. Next, when sin aboundeth in the abundance of the Word. 3. When God changeth the order and constitution of his creatures. 4. When God (to awaken) sendeth light judgements, and men are never a whit the better.

*S. Which way doth God use to bring about his wrath?*

*M.* First, he plagueth mens souls with hardnes of heart, and senselesnes. Next, he plagueth the creatures which should be for comfort unto man. Then he cometh upon the body, plagueing it with some sensible judgement, often in this life. Further, pouring out a sensible wrath upon the soul unto destruction. Lastly, he rejecteth and casteth both body and soul into torments for ever.

*S. Who then is in the most dangerous estate?*

*M.* Such who ly under the wrath of God, yet being senseles of the same.

*S. What if they be not wakened in time?*

*M.* Then they must perish in the severe wrath of God.

*S. Now, as ever you mean to see the face of God, and live in heaven for ever, speak from your conscience: May not one who hath a long time lived under the means, for the pre-*

*present shut up in hardness of heart, which he knoweth, and in part feeleth neither, being able to help or strive against it, so being and living under the wrath of God, conclude therefore that he is a reprobate, which shall at no time, either repent, or have a soft heart: and must we believe the words of such a party.*

*M.* No.

S. *For what reasons?*

*M.* First, because, let the party be what he can, howsoever hard-hearted or sinful, until he be called, he is but dead, and in the state of nature, like unto others of the Saints, *Peter*, *Paul*, *David*, &c. And therefore since all of us were dead in sins and trespasses Bears, Lyons, Wolves, Leopards, before we were tamed; haters of God, despiteful, proud, disobedient to parents; without natural affection, unmerciful by nature, and yet have been raised from the dead: so may such a one be in Gods own time, 2. Because, as when a King doth imprison any one for some offences, as it were folly for any man to presume to say, The King will never free such an one, nor he shall never be sorry for his faults. Much more so were it a fit of extream madness, in such a hard-hearted party, to presume to know Gods Counsel, or what in time he will work in the heart, loosing the

Eph. 2. 1. Isai. 1. 9. 2 Tim. 1. 2. Rom. 1. 30.

Bern. 9. 29

fetters

fetters wherewith he is bound, since it is the Lords Promise and Covenant, to take away our stony hearts, and give us fleshly ones: as also the end of Christs coming, to open the eyes of the blind, to bring out prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness, out of the prison-house. 3. Because God hath neither appointed any certain manner or time of calling, some being brought home at the sixth, ninth, eleventh hour: therefore though one have not in effectual calling obtained a soft heart, at twenty, thirty, forty, or fifty years of age, he may not thence conclude reprobation. 4. None but God knoweth things to come, seing he challengeth this super-excellency, as a proof proper only to the Deity 5. There is a kind of softness in that heart which knoweth and feeleth the hardness of the same, though the party deny it; yet sure corruption discovereth not corruption, nor nature, nature, and therefore hope remaineth. 6. Because, where there is discontent, trouble in mind, there is hope by Gods grace, repentance may come: in which estate (though the party plead contention) yet when we see former lights vanish, sometimes beloved company displeasing, temptations to appear, unnatural wishes, unrea-

Mic.7.8.9 sonable mad desires in them: Who will not confess that here is muddy water, which (when the storms are past) may clear again? 7. The omnipotency and goodness of God to other most miserable sinners, in pulling them spite of their hearts from their sins, without any cause in them; *Manasses, Nebuchadnezar, S. Paul, Mary Magdalen*, &c. may give hope of recovery, since many other in the like state, have found Gods mercies exceeding great in their conversion. Lastly, most certain it is, we must not believe or give credit to any who so affirm: for distempered men are not able to judge of diseases: no more can the distressed mind of the estate of the soul, especially joined with a black devilish melancholy humor, which the devil doth oftentimes abuse, to breed causeless fear in the heart of man.

2 Chap. 33
Dan. 5. 34
Act. 3. 5. 6
Mark 6. 19

*S. Were it possible to perswade any in such an estate, that they are tempted?*

M. It is impossible, while the violence of the temptation remaineth.

Rom. 5. 16 *S. Wherefore?*

M. Because of the strength of temptation and carnal reason, which for the present hath dominion in them: For then the field is near won, when the devil is of the party discovered for a devil, the temptation being laid open reason and judgement.

*S. Yet ſhew unto me, I beſeech you, how may we judge when one is thus tempted, or not?*

M. There be many ſigns: but to be brief, three principally; by their ſervice, language, and unnaturalneſs.

*S. Explain your meaning.*

M. Firſt, for ſervice; It is moſt certain, when they are ſo ready to obey the devil in all things, and diſobey God: to ſerve ſatan with pleaſure, and God by compulſion; pulled to good duties violently, as by the hair of the head; leaving them off quickly; in that their actions ſhew them to be tempted. 2. By their *Shibboleth*, we may judge them to be in a ſtrong temptation, when in ſome certain fits, ſome of them dare to affirm, that they know their hearts ſhall never be moved; that it is impoſſible that ever they ſhould be falſe hearted: that becauſe their hearts in time paſt could not be moved by any thing, therefore they ſhall, and can never be moved. And (which is more fearful blaſphemy) that God cannot move their heart, which for all the world, (free from temptation) they durſt not affirm. 3. By their unnaturalneſs. Nature doth ſeek by all means the preſervation of nature. Now when they become ſo unnatural, as to avoid humane ſociety, to think their beſt friends their foes,

1 Tim. 1. 18

Jud. 12 6.

Iſa. 58. 10. 21. 12. Pſa. 116. 11

to scoff at Religion, because they have no hope, to disturb and set by all means, good duties, like unto that maid who disturbed *Paul* and *Silas*, as they were about to pray, in *Lydias* house: Act. 16. 16. to seek out witty arguments for the devil against themselves, to laugh at, & reject all Gods arguments from his Word, bringing nothing against them but carnal, foolish, blind reasons from the devil, to be desperate in aggravating sin, beyond the mercies of God: to reject prayer, affirming it is to no purpose: to request not to be prayed for, &c. If these be not infallible signs of temptation, then never creature was tempted.

S. *What if the hardness of heart come after a precedent softness?*

M. Then there is good hope, yea, assurance that in Gods good time, the heart may be softer then ever: the party so escaping from under this wrath because the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. Rom. 11. 29.

S. *In how many conditions do you include men, in respect of this wrath?*

M. In four.

S. *which are they?*

M. First, those who feel deep wrath, and yet are far from wrath. Division 1. 2. Those who have not the deep sense of wrath & yet are far from wrath. 3. Those who feel no wrath, and yet are under the wrath

wrath of God. 4. Those who feel the wrath of God, and indeed shall perish in the same wrath.

S. *Who are those who feel wrath, and yet are far from the same?*

M. Those who have their conscience wakened to see their sin, and to feel the wrath of God for the same, which they hate, because it hath offended God. They mourn for sins likewise: not so much for fear of torments, as that they should have offended so good a God. They desire for reconciliation, to be at peace with God through Christ. They thirst also for the Spirit, to cause their hearts to love that God, hungring for the grace of sanctification. And lastly, although they feel nothing to comfort them, yet above hope, under hope they wait still.

S. *What should the exercise of the soul be, under this sort of smiting?*

M. First, It must have recourse to God, by strong cryes in prayer. 2. Practise repentance, by pouring out bitter tears unto God. 3. Exercise faith in resting upon the promises of life everlasting through Christ. 4. Cleave stedfastly to the love of God, in his mercy, grace, and goodness. 5. Draw it self away from the wrath, as fast as may be, lest it be devoured thereof. 6. Feed and meditate continually upon

the promise of life. And lastly, hold ever the eye of the soul upon Christ.

*S. Who are they who have not a deep sense of wrath, and yet are far from the wrath of God?*

M. First, those who never have felt wrath, but always peace. 2. Those who have felt the temptations of despair and doubting, yet afterwards have obtained peace. 3. Such who feel a hardness of heart, and can have no present relief.

*S. But be they who have never felt wrath, but always peace?*

M. Those whom God at their first conversion hath called with much sweetness, instructing their hearts by little and little for their sins. Next, such on whom God hath poured out a sense of his love, working in them a perswasion of mercy, with joy, renewing the mind: working a study of holiness, a hatred of sin, & a love of righteousness.

*S. Who be they who have found the temptation of despair and doubting, and yet immediate have found peace?*

M. Those whom God hath enlightned to see their sins, and the wrath of God for them, & been terrified doubting of their salvation and election: yet God afterwards shineth upon their souls, touching them with a sense of remission of sins, election and glory; whereupon ariseth that peace of God

which

which passeth all understanding, and that joy of the holy Ghost, unspeakable, and glorious.

S. *Who are those who feel the hardness of their heart, yet are not able to shake off the same?*

M. Those who have once felt that mollifying power of the Spirit, that light which draweth the soul to see it self, and its own vileness: to see also God in the face of Jesus Christ, and yet in the present find a kind of deadness within. H. 53:17. D. 31. 22.

S. *How may it be known that one is not under the wrath of God in such a disposition?* Psal. 5.6 &c.

M. First, such a one must look back unto his former experience, remembring the days of old, and the years of ancient time, and next again unto his present disposition.

S. *What must the present disposition be?*

M. A sense of hardness, deadness, and blindness; a sad heart for the absence of God, with a longing for his blessed presence. P. 42. 2. 3. & 143. 7.

S. *What must be the exercise of one in this state?* And 119.

M. A labouring and striving with the heart to attain feeling.

S. *Wherein must this strife consist?*

M. In a wrestling with God against the hardness of the heart, in Prayer and mourning.

S. But what if one be neither able to wreſtle nor ſtrive?

M. Yet muſt he ſpeak unto God, and ſhew him the diſpoſition of the ſoul, intreating him to help it for his Chriſts ſake.

S. What if one be not able to ſpeak for burden and trouble of ſoul?

M. He muſt groan unto God, hold up his hands and eyes unto him, deſire to deſire; uſe the outward means (though unwillingly and with torment) for when we are not able to uſe our feeling, the outward means may eaſe.

S. What comfort can this afford to any one, ſince God will be worſhipped in ſpirit and truth, which he in ſuch a caſe is not able to do?

M. It affordeth ſingular conſolation 1. In that we have a feeling of our ſelves and our great miſery. Next, in that ſuch a diſpoſition is unpleaſing unto us. 3. In that we would gladly have it made better. 4. In that we feel there is no comfort in heaven or earth for us, until God come.

S. How ſhould the ſoul reſt in ſuch an hard eſtate?

M. Reſt in hope. 2. Wait. 3. Say to God, give me ſuch an heart as thou deſireſt Lord, and then require thou of me ſuch an heart, and ſuch a worſhip as thou deſireſt.

S.

S. *Wherefore doth the Lord suffer his children to have and feel hardness of heart?* Gen. 1. 3.

M. First, that so much the better they may understand how miserable (by nature) they are. 2. That they may see where only help is to be found. 3. That being humbled, they may not be lifted up with spiritual pride. Lastly, that they may much esteem and cherish the favour of God, when he cometh in the power of the means. Ps. 1. 1. 2. Gen. 5. 4. Cor. 3. 4. Psal. 142. & 143. 6. 7.

S. *In such extremities, at what time cometh God to the soul?*

M. Unlooked for: when we are at the brink of dispair; or else when we have yielded, as overcome, and almost left desiring: or then when he giveth an earnest and violent desire, which neither can, nor will be satiat, until he come. When God at his [illegible] in the means. Psalm 77. Is. 28. 27. Ez. 36. 22. Is. 10. 20. Is. 48. 17. Ez. 23. 32. Is. 3. 12.

S. *Yet why suffereth the Lord his children (many times) to use all the means, and yet not to find him in the means, before he come, thus unlooked for?*

M. That we may know he only cometh when he will: nothing moving him, but his own good pleasure.

S. *What should we learn herein?*

M. Not to conclude reprobation, because to our feeling we find desertion. 2. Not to measure mercy by our present feeling. 3. To wait until he come (though we cannot feel his pre-

Ps. 42, 11 Mat. 7. 8. 9 Ps. 37. 2

sence) if it were until the last gasp.

*S. What if in the mean time there be no other sense but of stinging torments, and wrath?*

M. Yet must we make claim unto his promises: in wrath beseech him to remember mercy: saying unto him with *Job*, Lord, although thou wouldest slay us, yet will we trust in thee. Thus waiting until he come, not being hasty, and then in his own good time, he will appear to our comfort.

p. 27. 13. 14 Hab. 3. 2. Job. 13. 15 Is. 28. 15. & 54. 7. Jer. 31. 37

Wrath by ere wholly no wrath yet remains under the wrath of God.

*S. Who be they who feel no wrath, yet remaining under the heavy wrath of God?*

M. First, such as have no effectual calling from God. 2. Such as have never had any true sense of the bitterness and grievousness of sin. 3. Such as are not moved with the love of the truth, neither do love God, or have had any sense of his love, or the earnest of the Spirit. Lastly, all such who make a show of godliness, but have denyed the power thereof.

Rom. 7. 9. Jud. 19. 21. 24.

The several conditions of this estate

*S. How divide you those who are in this estate?*

M. They are partly out of the Church, and partly in the Church.

*S. Who be they that are out of the Church?*

Ep. 2. 12.

M. Those who have not among them the profession of the true God, as he hath revealed himself in his Word.

S

*S. Who be they in the Church that ly under the wrath, yet feel it not?*

M. First, those who profess without knowledge. 2. Those who have conscience without knowledge and holiness. 3. Those who have attained light, yet fight against their enlightning. Lastly, those who through the custome of sin, are hardned so, as with greediness they run forward in all outward and inward impieties: God (for the present) having given them over to a reprobat sense.

1 Cor. 15. 34. 2 Lev. 6. 1. 5. Heb. 6. 4. 5. Ep. 4. 18. 19. Rom. 18.

*S. How far may one proceed in show of true profession, and yet be under the wrath of God?*

How far a professor may be under this wrath. 2 pe. 2. 2. Luke 1. 13. 1 Cor. 13. Mat. 27. 4. Num. 13. 10. Mat. 19. 16. Heb. 6. 4. Mat. 6. 20. Rom. 2. 15. & 28. 1 Cor. 2. 2.

M. First, he may have a literal knowledge. 2. A temporal and historical faith, yea, and the faith of miracles. 3. He may have a sorrow for sin. 4. He may have a desire of heaven. 5. He may taste of the good Word of God, and of the powers of the world to come. Last of all, he may have an inward restraining power to curb sin, with an outward holiness.

*S. What knowledge is that which a wicked man may have?*

M. A knowledge of sin, of hell, of heaven, of mercy, of wrath, & of Christ, and of his meritorious death, burial, resurrection, and second coming, with all the points of Religion.

*S. What is the reason that this know-*

*ledge*

ledge keepeth them not from his wrath?

M. Becauſe it is not applyed cloſs unto the heart, to renew the ſpirit of the mind, to change the will and affections unto the love and obedience of Gods truth.

S. *What kind of knowledge call you this then?*

M. A literal knowledge, which puffeth up, but neither humbleth, nor ſanctifieth.

S. *Who hath this knowledge?*

M. The devils and reprobates, and ſuch who are not truly called by Gods holy Spirit.

S. *What is the cauſe that their faith ſaves them not?*

M. Becauſe it is not wrought by the Spirit, to apply Chriſt and all his benefits unto juſtification and ſanctification.

S. *What manner of ſorrow is this which wicked men may have?*

M. A worldly ſorrow which cauſeth death.

S. *Wherefore is this ſorrow?*

M. Not for the right cauſe, but for the terror of conſcience, and the puniſhment of ſin.

S. *What kind of deſire is this which wicked men may have of heaven?*

M. A natural deſire, but not ſpiritual.

S. *Why call you it a natural deſire?*

M.

M. Because wicked men would be in heaven, for their own ease, that thereby they might escape punishment only. Num. 21 10.

S. *Wherefore is such a desire natural?*

M. Because therein nature only seeketh the preservation of nature: and those who wish to be in heaven, only for their own ease, to be freed of pain, do only seek the preservation of nature. Job 5. 5.

S. *What kind of feeling is this which wicked men may have of the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come?*

M. Only fretting motions wrought by the Majesty of the Word, which over-shadoweth their souls.

S. *What is the cause that this feeling is not the true feeling?*

M. First, because it is not wrought by the Spirit of Adoption, after that special manner whereby he worketh in the elect. Next, because it bringeth no sure perswasion of election and glory. As also, because it neither feeleth the love of God, nor is bound close unto God by a secret love. Lastly, because that kind of feeling neither sanctifieth, nor feeleth the soul to repose in peace upon Christ Jesus. Jud. 19. 2 Tim. 3. Jon. 4. 6.

S. *What, call you this restraining power which the wicked may have to control sin?*

1 Tim. 3. 5 Mat. 6. 29 M. A secret general working of God repressing the force of nature, but withholding his sanctifying grace, and the renewing vertue of his holy Spirit.

S. *What call you this outward holiness in men wicked and perverse?*

M. An outward conformity with the Law of God, without the inward change of mind, will, and affection.

S. *Since then wicked men may be under the wrath of God, having so many properties of Christian professors; show unto me how in this narrow pinch of affinity, one may rest assured that he is the child of God?*

Mark 7. 5. 7. 8. 9. M. What is the special thing wherein you would have me to resolve you of?

S. *First, I would know how to discern, when our knowledge may be called a saving knowledge?*

M. If our knowledge be spiritual, it is saving.

S. *What do you mean by that?*

M. First, we must try if our minds be rightly informed according to the truth of Gods Word. Next, whether our hearts love that which we know. Lastly, we must look whether we practise that which we know and love; mourning because we are not able to obey, and strive against our rebellion, that we may obey that light of God which is in our mind. This is spiritual knowledge.

Cant. 4. 37 Ps. 119. 7 and 40. 8.

Rom. 7. 15 Ps. 23. 24

S.

S. *But if a man neither know, love, nor obey, what can he then say of himself, save this, that God is greater then his conscience; and therefore justly may condemn him?*

M. Yet if there be a desire to love and yield obedience unto that which one knows: sometimes groaning in the spirit unto God, sometimes mourning, and constantly waiting with a heavy heart, until such time as the Lord shall pour forth his renewing grace; all is yet safe. Ps. 119. 5. Isai. 1. 6. John 2. 4. prov. 1. 21

S. *What warrant have we so to do?*

M. His own Promises.

S. *Shew them I intreat you?*

M. Blessed are they which hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled. Whosoever waireth on me, shall never be ashamed. I will pour water upon the dry ground, and floods upon the thirsty ground. Mat. 5. 6 Isai. 30. 13 and 4. 3.

S. *Seing that the wicked have a certain Faith which justifieth not; what manner of Faith is that which bringeth salvation?*

M. That faith which is a justifying before God. Rom. 5.

S. *Who worketh this Faith?*

M. The holy Spirit. Ebp. 2.

S. *What thing is that which the soul apprehendeth by Faith?* Act. 20. 2 Tim. 2. Phil. 2. 5

M. Jesus Christ, God and Man, blessed for evermore, our Mediator, who was

humble

humble unto the death of the croſs, for our ſakes, now ſitting at the right hand of God the Father, with all the rich benefits which he hath purchaſed, to be poured out upon us in this life, and in the life to come.

S. *How ſhall we know whether as yet we have ſo laid ſure hold of Chriſt, as to make him our own?*

M. Firſt, we muſt mark if our ſouls have perceived all-ſufficiency of grace to be in him, and the God-head bodily dwelling in him. Next, we muſt look if we betake our ſelves unto Chriſt Jeſus, to repoſe upon him, looking for righteouſneſſe and life only in him.

Then muſt we behold what love we have unto our Redeemer; and try whether or not we would gladly love him, better then all the pleaſures in heaven and earth.

Further, we muſt mark if ever our ſouls have found joy in believing in the death and reſurrection of the Lord Jeſus. Laſtly, look if our heart be allured with a loving langour to deſire for that ſenſe and feeling we once had of him, reſolving to obey him, if we were able.

S. *Seeing that you ſay the wicked have ſorrow for ſin, how ſhould the elect know that their ſorrow is not the ſorrow of wicked men?*

M.

M. The sorrow of the elect, is a godly sorrow unto life.

S. *Why call you it a godly sorrow?*

M. Because it is wrought by God himself. 2. Because the heart breaketh not so much for shame and pain, as for having offended so loving and so merciful a Father; the piercing of so loving a Redeemer, and for grieving of the holy Spirit, our Comforter. 2 Cor. 7:18 phil: 2:13: ps: 31,4: Zach: 12:10 ps: 31:13:

S. *What kind of sorrow is the sorrow of Gods Children?*

M. A bitter sorrow mingled with sweetness. ps: 30:10: & 34,7,8:

S. *Are the Children of God ever affected with this grief when they are sorrowful?*

M. No. ps: 38:4-5, 6 & 88:31:

S. *What other disposition then have Gods children in their sorrow?*

M. Bitterness, and a terror.

S. *Whence proceedeth this fearful estate to their sense?*

M. Partly from a feeling of the absence of God, and hardness of their hearts, and partly in feeling the stings of a guilty conscience. ps: 51:1,2: & 51:3: & 33:3: ps: 77:1: & 42:5: 66: 10,11,12: & 42:1,2: & 84:20: & 63:1,2: Rom: 4:8:

S. *How may one know himself to be in a good estate under such a disposition?*

M. First, by his former experience, that once he did feel the sweetness of Gods favour. Next, if in some measure (how smal soever) he desireth above all things in the earth, the wonted presence

of

of God. Lastly, if he wait and hope above hope, that he who hath once begun, will never repent him, resolving, that though God should slay him, yet he would trust in him.

Lam. 3. 28 Phil. 1. 16. Ep. 2. 1. Rom. 3. 22 23, 24.

S. *What may we learn from this sort of disposition?*

M. First, that by nature we are separate from God, and God from us. Next, that all Gods children (until grace make a difference) are as hard-hearted as any reprobate.

Ge. 25. 23. Ne. 23. 15

S. *Seing the wicked (you say) may have a desire of heaven, what difference is there betwixt the desire of the elect and of the reprobate?*

M. The desire of the reprobate, or of those in the state of reprobation before calling, is meerly natural, such as was *Esaus* desire of the birth-right, and *Balaams* desire of the death of the righteous; but the desire of the elect is spiritual and heavenly.

Isa. 63. 6.

S. *How may we know when our desires are spiritual?*

M. First, by the acknowledging of that which we chiefly desire. Next, of the end wherefore we desire it.

S. *What is that which chiefly we must desire?*

M. God in Christ, to dwell in our souls here by his Spirit, to sanctifie and quicken us, to raise us up again in the great Day, transforming and

Ep. 3. 10. 13 Ja. 3. 21.

and making our vile bodies like unto Christs glorious body, to reign with him for ever.

S. *For what end should we desire this?* psal. 73. 25 & 16. 1.

M. Even for God himself, the end of all.

S. *In desiring heaven, what should we chiefly respect?* Rom. 7. 24 pa. 1. 2. 3.

M. Not so much our own ease, as that being freed from sin, in holiness and joy, with unspeakable love (as a vessel full of glory) we may praise and magnifie God for evermore.

S. *Seing the reprobate may have a certain sort of feeling, how may we discern whether our feeling be that sense which is peculiar to the child of God or not?*

M. By the Spirit of Adoption.

S. *Which be the sure marks and fruits of Adoption in us?*

M. Perswasion of the love of God, towards us, of our election, redemption, and glorification; joy flowing from this feeling, with increase of perswasion, and peace which passeth all understanding. Rom. 8. 6. and 15. 7.

S. *Yet what if the soul have no such disposition?*

M. Yet must we look back unto what we have felt. Next, we must see what we desire to feel, and further what we hope to feel.

S. *How may one know whether as yet he hath ever had any feeling?*

M.

1 Cor. 2. p. 73. 24. 25. & 31. & 3. 7. 8. 9.

M. He must look, if ever, in laying sure hold of Christ, his soul hath been filled with a spiritual sweetness above all the pleasures of nature, which in some measure hath left a seal and stamp of heaven in the soul, that hath thus enabled him to discern betwixt an absence and a presence of God, so that he is always joyful when he hath any feeling of Gods love; by the contrary, ever sad and heavy for his absence.

And 50. 15 & 63. 2. & 89. 14.

S. *Yet seeing the wicked may have an inward restraining vertue to curb sin and an outward conformity with the law of God; how may it be known, whether one hath a restraining vertue of the holy Spirit?*

M. This is most easie to discern.

Ezr. 10. 30 Act. 1. 17 Luc. 12. 10 Ier. 11. 9 Ia. 20. 43 Ps. 51. 1. 2 Rom. 7. 24 Psal. 41. 1. 1 119 1 Ps. 29. 9 Heb. 2. 1 Ps. 110. 127 c. 39. 1

S. *Explain your meaning.*

M. The first internal work of the Spirit, is a sight of sin which offends the Majesty of God; a sight also of God who hath been offended. Next, a secret sorrow, proceeding from a hatred to sin, with a love of that glorious offended Majesty provoked, then a true desire to be freed of sin, with a loving heart, and earnest desire to love God for himself. Further also, a purpose and resolution to consecrate our secret thoughts, will and affections unto his holiness, as a living sacrifice. A strife also against all the pleasures and

oc-

occasions of sin, with an endeavour to keep our thoughts and affections stedfastly upon God and his will. Lastly, as the mind naturally strayeth from God, the will being perverse, and the affection disordered: if there be then a sting in the conscience bringing true remorse: These be signs of the operation of the true Spirit by his renewing grace.

Gen. 6. 5
Je. 17. 9
ps. 32. 1. 4
1Co. 7. 11

S. *Seeing the work of the Spirit is a thing sensible, which is felt in his renewing vertues, in the slaughter of sin and reformation unto newness of life, what if (all this while) one feel nothing but the growth of sin, hardness of heart, and blindness of mind?*

M. First, he must see if he be able to discern his sin, blindness and hardness of heart. 2. Look if he secretly mislike the same. 3. Mark if he would willingly wish it removed. 4. Consider if he have desire to use, or any ways wish he might use the means, though to his feeling he is no way able to use the same. 5. Look back if at any time God formerly did ever give him grace to believe in him: (for that present) without any sense or feeling, even when not being able to pray, in languor, patience and hope, he waited for Gods presence. 6. Consider, if after earnest prayer and sorrow for sin, at any time he hath found light, joy,

Jer. 14. 20
Rom. 7. 14
ps. 51. 23
Cant. 1. 4
Jer. 14. 22
Ho. 7. 8. 9
ps. 27. 9. 6
Is. 8. 47
psal. 42. 17. 18. 19
Lam. 3. 26. 32. 33

found light, joy, peace, a perſwaſion of mercy, with ſome ſoftneſs of heart, the power of ſin abated. Laſtly, if he find
Rom. 7. 19. this continually before his eyes; The good which I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that do I.

*S. Declare then unto me ſome marks of*
Pſa. 116. 1 & 39. 11, & 51. 19. *the renewing Spirit?*

M. A love of God and his Image for his own cauſe, beeing goodneſs, and love it ſelf. Then an unfeigned hatred of that which offended God. Laſtly, a miſliking of our own evil heart, with a true thirſt and hunger to have it made better.

*S. Can a reprobate have theſe marks?*
Ja. 2. 26 M. No.

*S. How ſo?*

M. Becauſe they be the marks of election, and are wrought by the Spirit of adoption, which a reprobate cannot receive.

*S. Who are they who feel the wrath of God, and ſhall alſo periſh in the ſame wrath?*

M. Thoſe whom God in his judgement waſens, giving the conſcience over to find the deluge of torments, the ſting of reprobation; withdrawing from them his Spirit, either to ſeek mercy truly, or to believe that there is any mercy for them, ſo deſparing.

*S. When doth the Lord waken ſuch*

wick-

*wicked men, to feel these horrors of conscience?*

M. Some sooner, some later; some longer before their death, as *Cain*; some again immediatly before their death, as *Judas*. Ge. 4. 4. 13 Mat. 27. 4

*S. What kind of sense hath a reprobate, when he is thus wakened?*

M. Light, feeling, and perswasion.

*S. What light seeth he?*

M. Convicting, condemning, and tormenting him. 2. The great God a consuming fire to devour him. 3. Eternity of pain prepared for him, and to be given over by the Judge to be tormented for ever with the devil and his angels. Isa. 48. 22 Heb. 12. 29 Mat. 12. 41

*S. What feeleth the reprobate being thus wakened?*

M. First, that sin is bitter. 2. That there is an everlasting wrath prepared for impenitent sinners. 3. That the conscience (howsoever for a while asleep in hardness of heart) is capable of wrath. 4. That it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. And lastly, that hell torments do take away all peace and comforts, bringing nothing but sorrow and unquietness; yea, that a little look of hell, for one evil thought, is more fearful and terrible then all the torments in the earth. Gen. 4. 11 Isa. 30. 33 Mat. 21. 27 Heb. 10. 31 Mar. 9. 45 46. Luke 16. 2

*S. Whereof is the reprobate perswaded, when he is thus wakened?*

M.

Mat.27.5 M. First, That God never elected him, nor yet Christ Jesus hath redeemed him, and that he was never renewed
1Sa.28.15 by the Spirit of grace. 2. That he shall never have comfort in heaven or earth. 3. That there is an everlasting wrath
Gen. 4.14 prepared for him, and that he shall ne-
Mov.28.1 ver come forth of that prison and torment. Lastly, that God and his creatures visible and invisible, elect and re-
Heb.12.16 probat shall all be his enemies, help-
Rom.2.5 ing to aggravat his torments.

*S. What be the decrees by which a reprobat is brought unto this torment?*

M. First, prophanness. 2. Impenitency. 3. Infidelity. 4. Senslesness and dead
Heb. 3.12 Eph.14.19 Gen.4.13 Mat.22.13 security. 5. A wakening by a sensible wrath. Lastly, a rejecting of him into everlasting torments.

*S. What difference is there betwixt the elect and the reprobat, in the sense and feeling of the wrath of God?*

M. First, the reprobat he feeleth
Rev: 6:18 Gen: 4:14 and fretteth at the same. Next, his torment paineth him so, that he would gladly be rid of the pain, but never truly repenteth him of the sin. 3. The weight of his torment (proceeding from a guilty conscience, and the sight
Mat: 27.5 of God the Judge) maketh him to despair, cast off mercy, turn his back upon God, and his free promises in Christ Jesus; so plunging himself (without recovery) in the wrath of God.

S.

*S. How doth the child of God behave himself in the feeling of the wrath of God?*

M. Being wakened out of the deep sleep of sinful security. First, torment maketh him to lament, and sorrow that he should have provoked his God thus to deal with him. Next, he thirsteth for reconciliation with God, through Jesus Christ. Further, he draweth near, laying sure hold upon the Promises of the Word of God, desiring to feel them by experience. Yea, more, he feeleth no salvation for him out of Christ crucified, and therefore renounceth himself, and all that is in him, cleaving only to Gods free mercy and love in the Lord Jesus. Lastly, he giveth not over, but constantly waiteth, hanging still on Gods true love, and the truth of his Promises, revealed in his Word.

*S. Yet shew unto me further, how near the child of God may come unto the wicked in the sense and feeling of the wrath of God?*

M. First, Gods child will feel all his impediments standing up betwixt God and him. 2. He may have no kind of feeling, either of the love of God, or of mercy, election, and redemption, or of the Spirit of Sanctification. 3. Gods child will feel for his sins (in Gods absence) in his conscience, burning wrath, unquietness, and torment.

4. When he thinketh of God, he may be troubled. Eternity will dash him, the conscience of him also (at that time) may bear such witness against him, that
Ps. 88. 15. altogether he may doubt of his salvation, easily then he may be perswaded to dispair: and if at such a time, it were given unto the sense of his own conscience to judge, he would willingly subscribe his own condemnation.

S. *Declare then what is that manner of working by which God useth to heal a soul being thus dis[illegible]ed?*

Isa. 15. M. He hath a secret working for that present, unfelt by the patient, yet afterwards revealed.

S. *But in such a narrow pinch, how may we judge of that secret working?*

Psal. 51. 7. 1 Kor. 15. 18 2 Cor. 7. 11 M. First, by that grief we have for grieving of our God. 2. By that desire we have to be reconciled with God for stil the more grievous that the torment is, so much the greater will the desire of reconciliation be, and the hatred to sin. 3. By that hope we have above hope against our feeling, looking unto Gods free promises, with assurance that he wil come, with this resolution, that though he delayed his coming until our last
Isa. 8. 7. breath, yet for all this, that we would wait for him.

S. *When Gods children cannot feel, should they measure their estate according to their feeling, believing that God so accounteth*

counterfeit of them, as for the present, their conscience witnesseth.

M. No. S. Why so?

M. Because none may measure the favour of God by their present temptations, seing feeling is a false Judge.

S. Yet when one having sufficient knowledge, walking in all the means, so much as may be, and can for all this have no assurance, or feeling of remission of sins: is not this lamentable?

M. It may be so for a while, but it is with such, as wit: those who have a bad stomack, who though they cannot make use of their provisions of knowledge for the present, yet when their appetite return, they find better use of it then ever before. Psal: 119: 32

S. God (we know) promiseth to give those who delight in him, their hearts desire; yet we see they have it not always in spiritual things, as true joy, feeling assurance of his love, &c. how doth he then fulfil his promise? Psal: 37: 4

M. It is most certain the breach is always on our part; for such look aside on other worldly matters, and not directly upon God, making him their sole delight, suffering their corruptions bear sway: and then it is just with God to take away for a time their feeling; for he seeth, if such had not sometimes a dead heart, they would have a proud heart, (which is worst of Psal: 51: 4: 1 Cor: 4: 6:

all ) therefore he leaveth them for a time.

S. *But they glady would be freed from both ?*

Jer. 16. 17

*M.* Our hearts yet are so deceitful, that God seeth we could not escape the latter, but by undergoing the former.

S. *What then should such think of themselves, who for some years together, find less feeling in prayer, joy in all good duties, &c. then in former times, although they use the means :*

Why do no wiers in Christianity have much feeling. Psal. 77: 78: 9.

*M.* Such think too hardly of themselves, oftentimes without cause, razing the ground-work of their election, and calling all the pledges of Gods former favours into question : which indeed they should not do, but rather gather so many more as they can. For though they think that they had better feelings at their first conversion, yet it is not so : ( if for the present they stick closs unto all Gods means ) for their first feelings were in a great part, rather sudden passions, then grounded comforts : but after they come to have any true conflicts with their souls, the mud of the flesh is more purged away, and all things are more sound then at the first.

S. *Yet you know, it is written, that the righteous in their old age shall be fat and flourishing, bringing forth fruit: what*

*shal some say then, or think of themselves, when they find a decay in their memories &c. deadness in their affections, &c. though they may not call their election in question, may they not fear som strang judgment?* Ps. 30. 3. 4.

M. No surely: for perhaps then they may flowrish most of all in humility, holiness, patience, experience, and such like graces, when they want those stirring and hot affections. Neither ought we to look for such strength of memory, and lively operative actions of grace, in age, in sickness, in great sorrows and temptations, as at other times in young years, free from such assaults. Nevertheles, in such times, God giveth graces most fit for those times; as in age, gravity, ability to give good counsel, to speak from experience, &c. so that though the aged Christians have not always most life and feeling, and stirring grace, yet are they better seasoned then young souldiers (as the prophet speaketh) *Give thy strength unto thy servant*: so have they a great deal more of Gods strength to walk with; yea, the greatest measure thereof at their most need: which if we should attain unto too soon, it would make us proud and secure; to say with the rich man, *Soul, take thy rest, thou hast enough for many years*. And therefore as hounds do hunt best when they do follow the sent, not the fight: for then they run a mad- Psal. 44. 17. 18, 19. Psal. 86. 16. Luke 12. 19.

madding, and ready like to break their necks: So aged Christians, though they follow by faith, and have less feeling in sense, yet do they go on more strongly to heaven, then such who run all upon their sense.

*S. How cometh it then to pass that Gods children are so addicted unto feeling, so mourning when they have lost the same? yea, so troubled, that they imagine all is gone for ever?*

*M.* Just as a prick of a pin, or some other distemper in one part of the body doth so vex us, that we for the present are so grieved for the same, that we forget that strength and health which is in the rest of the body: so the feeling and sense of Gods love being for a while lost, doth so damp with the sorrow thereof, all other graces in the soul, that for the present we can discern none, and so imagine all to be lost for ever.

Cant. 5. 6.

*S. What maketh Gods children so wholly upon feeling?*

2 Cor. 5. 7.

*M.* Certainly (as I think) because they remember not that it is written, *We walk by faith, and not by sight*: and so their faith being weak, by reason they are not well cloathed with their spiritual armour, having forgot their consolation; no marvel they stagger and reel to and fro, having lost the touch of that hand which had wont to

Heb. 12. 3.

guide

guide them. So that I say, it must be want of faith, the strength whereof appeareth most in the least measure of feeling.

*S. Wherefore then doth God give unto his children such a measure of feeling at their first conversion, yet afterwards withdraweth the same?*

*M.* Even as we see we may lead a little child when he is young whither we will with apples, and such-like toyes: so are we (being babes in Christ) led by feeling at our first conversion: then we are altogether for rewards: at which time, if God made us not better offers then the world, we would forsake him, and cleave unto the same. But (with the woman of *Canaan*) to hold out in repulses, without feeling, to gather strong arguments to move God again and again, argues a strong faith. Again, Christians have ordinarily more feeling at first, because then every thing is new unto them, receiving more from God, then looked for. Neither are our prayers then so much under-propt with arguments as with feeling, then we come with simple suits, thinking God loves me, and therefore he will hear me. As little children use to come to their Parents, they bring no forcible reasons; but, I pray you, Father, &c. give me such a thing; neither do their Parents expect any;

Heb. 5. 13.

Matth. 15.

psa. 116.1

but are well content (yea gladly) to hear them ask at first. But when proceſs of time maketh thoſe feelings (by ule) not to ſeem ſo new, and ſo not ſenſible, God hiding his face, and feeling decaying, then do they begin to lay about them with their knowledge, to labour for ſtrong reaſons in their prayers, to ſeek how to move God beſt by his nature, promiſes, and former mercies. And then indeed (whatſoever we think) is the beſt growth in faith and all goodneſs; which after the ſtorm is paſt, Gods children can ſee and rejoice, yea, and live upon the ſtore a good while after, having thoſe prayers which they made in their deepeſt anguiſh, as the beſt Pillars of their aſſurance of Gods love.

*S. Why doth God, for the moſt part, ſo long delay to give comfort and feeling unto his children?*

*M.* Not like unto ſome Phyſicians and Chirurgians, who with needleſs delays put their patients to extraordinary pains: but for their good, to make them ſpend prayers, whereby they are always gainers: the pains whereof is but the croſſing of the fleſh, which the more it is tamed, the better it is for them.

*S. What then ſhould one do, when he hath long attended without any comfort or feeling?*

*M.*

*M.* When the soul would most willingly dispair (because of the sense of sin, terror of conscience, and Gods absence) then believe most, lay surer hold then ever upon the promises of the mercies of God in Christ. Ps. 71. 14. Job 13. 11. Ps. 19. 23. 24. 25.

S. *How can one say that he believeth, not finding in him the fruits of faith, which are prayer, comfort, peace, and holiness?*

*M.* Faith and lake of feeling may well stand together; yea, and great doubting, and he who believeth most and feeleth least, is he who glorifieth God most. For when we feel, we possess (as it were) a beginning of that which shal be in heaven. We live now by faith and hope, not by sight and feeling. 2 Cor. 5. 7. 11. 36. 3.

S. *But how should the conscience in the mean time rest, since feeling is no competent Judge?*

*M.* Build up that Rock, against which the gates of hell cannot prevail.

S. *What is that?*

*M.* To stick close unto Christ, and unto the vertue of his death and resurrection; remembring the justifying bloud of Christ, the satisfying bloud of Christ, the meritorious bloud of Christ, the comfortable resurrection of Christ Jesus; and that he came not to call the righteous, but the sinners unto repentance: that he came for the sick, and not for the whole: that he biddeth all Mat. 16. 18. Job. 29. 34. Nat. 9. 15. Mal. 11. 28. R. v. 12. 2.

laden and weay sinners come unto him
Isai. 1:18 Ex. 3:1 Mat. 21:20 Is. 61:1 Mat. 6:20 Is. 61:1 Zach. 15: 4 53:
yea, and all such who are athirst, to come unto the waters and drink freely; assuring them that though their sins were red as scarlet, yet that he will make them white as snow: as also he himself hath sworn, that as he liveth, he desireth not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should turn from his wickedness, and live; promising that he will neither break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax; but will bind up that which is broken, with the comforts of his spirit; will make whole that which is wounded, with the plaister of his precious bloud, and bring home the lost sheep, rejoycing also at the return of the forlorn son.
Phil. 3.6. Eph. 2:1
His love also covereth both the multitude of sins, and the sinner, with his own shining righteousness: He also quickneth and raiseth up the dead soul that is stinking in the grave of sin. And, to be short, he saith, He who believeth shall never be ashamed; but shall be raised in that great day with
Ro. 8.33. 2 Co. 8:1.
a glorious body, like unto the most beautiful body of Christ Jesus, and shall never be condemned, but have everlasting life. This is the Rock I speak
Psal. 91.1. and 2[illegible]:5. and 32.7.
of, and on this Rock must the soul anchor, when it is tost betwixt the strong winds and deep waves of sin and everlasting wrath. For blessed is he who be-

believeth, though he never saw Jesus with his eyes. Yea, suppose one never had any feeling of him, still waiting in hope and languor, and resting upon the love and mercy of Christ Jesus revealed in the Word; This is a sure ground to rely upon, that as God is Truth itself, so he will most certainly perform all his promises, in his own good time, being both merciful and powerful to perform whatsoever he promiseth.

Jo. 2. 29
Lam. 3. 24
c. 29. 27.
[illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]
Jo. 2. 34

S. *Yet why may not one who doubteth of his election reply, It is certain, God is merciful, true, and powerful, but what is that unto me, being that I cannot perceive in particular that he hath made a promise unto me?*

M. First, I would have such a party to assure himself, that this is but a jugling deluding sophistry of the devil to make any to pry in the decree of God, to see whether his name be written there or not, before he use the means: for then this followeth, that because I cannot see Gods Decree, therefore I will use no means, all are in vain; which temptation, if the devil can once settle, keeping such parties from the means, then he knoweth they be sure his own. Next, I would wish them to remember; that the Lord is so abundantly merciful in making his promises; that he excludeth no sort of persons,

Is. 43. 10.
11. 2. [illegible]
40. 18. [illegible]
27. 27.

Jo. 2. 1[illegible]
Gal. 3. 25

persons; neither *Jew* nor *Gentile*, bond nor free, high nor low, rich nor poor, but the righteousness of God through Jesus Christ, is in all, and upon all who believe. That there is no exception of persons; for all have sinned, and are deprived of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption made in Christ Jesus: yea, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, whosoever they be, excluding no sort, nor degree, from laying hold on life; much less any particular person. Rather (then) must one gather the quite contrary arguments against the devil, and carnal reason. And thus return their arguments. All Gods children (for the most part) who in former times have been called and enlightned (when they were dead in sins and trespasses) at their departure from *Sodom*, were not so curious at the first to pry in Gods decree, to know whether their names were written in the Book of life, before they would use the means: but they rejecting Faith and carnal reason, did by degrees use the means to their power; and so by the constant use of the same, and Gods blessing therewith, by little and little, at length found their eyes opened, their hearts softned, the whole man in part sanctified, so attaining unto the know-

knowledge of his decree: Therefore I will also use the means (rather obeying God then the devil) which though by and by they prove not effectually, yet I will wait Gods good time, and who knoweth, but at length I may speed as well as others? And so again, though I find not my name in the free Covenant of *mercy*, yet since it excludeth none by name, I will hope still, though I be most sinful: yet Christ he came into the world to save sinners; he justifieth all those who believe in him, how miserable soever they be, yet his righteousness apprehended, covereth all their infirmities. But so it is, I am a vile sinner, laden and burdened with iniquities: therefore I will believe, and my Lord will justifie me, and I will draw near unto God, and he will ease me: I will apprehend and cleave close unto his righteousness how vile and naked soever I be of my self: And thus I shall escape in the midst of all the tempests: For, God, if I be penitent, is more powerful to forgive and heal my rebellions, then I am able to provoke his anger. Now the ground of this consolation is the revealed truth of God, which is as sure as if we did see him in an extraordinary manner, both feeling and hearing him speak unto the heart and ear, or ravishing us in visions as he did to *Adam*, *Abraham*,

*Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses*, the *Prophets* and *Apostles*, or as unto *Paul* out of heaven: for heaven and earth shall pass away before any title of his Word shall fall upon the ground. And he who resteth upon this Word, out and beyond his feeling, he resteth upon the arm of God; and as God is true, shall undoubtedly find deliverance: but he who measureth the promits of God by his feeling, & thinketh that he believeth not, but when he feeleth, he sinneth grievously; for he compareth all undoubted verity grounded upon God, (which shall be performed in Gods good time, as certainly as God is truth itself) with an uncertain and vanishing feeling, which may fail us, but the promises of God cannot. He therefore who measureth his faith by his feeling, deceiveth himself, because neither is it permanent, neither have we any warrant of the measure, time, or continuance thereof; seing the Lord cometh when he will, and as he will, and as he seeth to be most for his glory and our good, even in our most need. And as for the chief grounds of faith, there is no need to go up unto heaven to seek for them, neither to dig down into hel to find them out: For (as *Moses* speaketh) the Word of truth is near unto us; our eyes see it continually, our hands handle it, our ears hear the same read

Act. 9. Mat. 5. 18. Luc. 1. 54.

Joh. 3. 38.

Rom. 3. 4. Heb. 10. 23. Is. 33. 6. 7. 8. 11.

Is. 9. 6. 7. 163. 5.

and

and preached unto us. And he that believeth in his heart (as the Scripture speaketh) that Jesus Christ is dead and risen again, confessing him also with his mouth, shall be saved. Rom. 10. 9

S. *What manner of working is that which the Lord worketh with the soul, when he revealeth himself unto us?*

M. First, he removeth darkness, terror & that which presseth down, & doubting. Next, he poureth forth upon the soul, 1. A sensible light. 2. A perswading light. 3. A comfortable light. Eph. 5. 8. Acts 26. 18. & 2. 17.

S. *Explain your meaning in so saying?*

M. I mean this, that when God worketh with the soul, he will pour out the light of his Spirit upon the same, showing clearly unto the party, that he loveth him, and through love hath chosen, redeemed, and in the heaven will crown him.

This light bringeth joy unspeakable and glorious. This light bringeth that peace of God which passeth all understanding. And during this light, we feel that which the eye never saw, the ear heard, neither can enter into the heart of man to think of. 1 Pet. 1. 8. Phil. 4. 7. 1 Cor. 2. 9. &c.

S. *How shall we try in such experience, whether that light we feel be the true light or not?*

M. First, we must try how the soul was disposed before that light came. Next, try what sort of feeling we have

in

in that light. Lastly, we must mark what stamp it leaveth in the heart, and how we are disposed after feeling.

Eccles. 5. 8. Act. 2. 37. Deut. 28. 56. 66.

S. *What manner of disposition should be in the soul before that light came?*

*M.* A darkness, deadness, and senslesness with torment, at sometimes doubting, and terror: a sensible absence of the power of the holy Ghost, either to comfort or sanctifie.

S. *Doth every man feel this estate?*

*M.* No.

S. *Who then are they who feel this miserable estate of the soul?*

*M.* None in a manner, but the children of God.

S. *How may one know when the sight of his misery is wrought by the Spirit of God?*

Act. 2. 37. Deut. 13.

*M.* Because it is an effect of his working.

S. *Shew me that?*

*M.* It is a light which must show unto us our darkness, and it is a presence which maketh us to feel and see an absence.

S. *Yet to go on, perswade me, I intreat you, more fully thereof?*

*M.* Look then first to the experience of the Saints of God.

Gal. 2. 8.

Saint *Paul* saw not himself until God called him, yea, he thought himself without reproof. Next, let any one who is called, look unto his own experience.

rience, and he shall see there was a time when he had no feeling of that miserable estate. Now when we shall find a change, nature cannot be the worker thereof: For nature hath not that light to discover unto us our misery. We are dead in sin by nature, and blind also; how is it then possible for a dead man to see or feel? So that it must needs be a light, surpassing a natural light, which showeth unto us our misery. Again, if it were only nature which discovereth unto us our miseries (seing nature retaineth still her own natural opinions;) what is the cause that there was a time when we did neither see our selves, nor our misery? For if the sight of our misery were natural, we ever would have seen the same. So, because it is of grace, blind nature could never show the same; therefore the sight of our misery is by the special working of the holy Spirit.

R. 7. 9.

Eph. 2. 1.
R. 2. 1.

R. 8. 26

S. *But Cain, and divers other wicked men, did feel their own misery; how may we discern betwixt their sight, and that of Gods children?*

M. The sight which wicked men have of themselves, and their misery, it cometh after some evil deed done, being guilty; and thus convicted of the crime by their natural conscience. Next, they see the punishment, and only therefore tremble. Further, their fear is for the

Isa. 33. 14
Gen. 4. 13. 14

the punishment only, as Cain was: As also they feel not with any continuance the miserable state of their soul to strive against it, to subdue it unto true remorse: neither can they see the wickedness of their heart, or truly desire to have it renewed, or brought under an heavenly sense of Gods love & favor.

Isa. 63. 17. Psal. 51. 18. *S. Shew unto me also, how saith the child of God his miserable heart?*

*A.* The chief thing the child of God looketh into, is the heart. Next, he feeleth the evil disposition thereof. Further, he is grieved with the sense of the same. Then he thirsteth to have it made better, rather then to obtain the whole world, & all the pleasurs thereof. There will also be still a strife (at the least) in his desire & will. Lastly, at some times Gods child will feel his heart made better then usual; that is, he will feel the hardness, blindness, unquietness thereof somewhat abated; and light, softness, & peace, in place thereof. So that when the presence of God is in the heart, Gods child feeleth it: when it is removed he discerneth it. For the truly wicked feel not a hard heart, neither know they what a soft heart meaneth. It is therefore only peculiar to the child of God, to be able to discern rightly of his own misery and Gods mercy.

Psal. 3. 17. Ier. 6. 15. *S. But what if one do still feel nothing but hardness of heart, and blindness of*

*mind,*

kind, as yet none being able to perceive a change?

*A.* First, he must try whether that sense of hardness he feeleth, be the work of God, seing there was a time when he had not this sense. Next, mark if he be pleased with that estate, or rather gladly would have it made better (if possible it may be) though it were but like unto smoaking flax: Remembring that promise, blessed are they who hunger & thirst for righteousness, for they shal be filled. Further, he must warily mark whether at any time he is able (how weakly soever) to speak, intreat, and pray unto God for mercy, to have the heart softned, &c. None can make us to pray in any measure, save the Spirit, yea, though there be but a sigh unto God, it is surely wrought by his Spirit. Then se, if after prayer, or in prayer he hath ever obtained any ease or rest. Lastly, though he obtain no ease, yet let him look if he would gladly have a soft heart in some measure (how soever weakly relying upon the Word) hoping that God in his own good time will come, therefore waiting in patience.

Isa. 42. 3 Mat. 5. 6.

Isa 38. 14.

Rom. 8. 26

Phil. 4. 7.

Psal. 40. 1.

*S. What learn we hence?*

*A.* First, that the sight of our selves cometh not of our selves, but of God, 2. That we are in a blessed and happy estate, when we have a sense and feeling.

1 Cor. 2. 12

Mat. 5.

ling.

ling of our misery, being displeased therewith, & desiring from our hearts to have it removed. 3. That in such an estate, we are those with whom God is now a working, if we be able to discern betwixt a soft and a hard heart, betwixt the light of the Spirit, and the darkness of nature. 4. That when we obtain but some piece of desire, and sometimes some little grace to pray, with a little hope reposing upon the Word of God; that albeit to our feeling, God is not near unto us, yet that in his own good-time he will come again: so that as truely as I feel an absence, desiring his presence, he will as surely satisfie our desires, letting us feel his blessed presence. Lastly, though we be but as bruised reeds, and smoking flax, having nothing to boast of, either of holiness or feeling, as the least of all Saints, yet that God will neither break off our longing, nor quench our desire. And so that finally we are in the state of grace, notwithstanding all hellish temptations.

M. 11. 13. 16
B. Rajo. 2. 3.

M. 2. 7. 9.
Is. 1. 14.

Isai. 42.

*S. How should we try whether that be the true light or not, which in the time of feeling is felt?*

*M.* If we mark in the time of feeling, wherewith the soul is filled.

*S. What then filleth the soul?*

*M.* An unspeakable power, which transformeth the mind, with a sensible pre-

presence of that great light, making the soul to exult, & rise up in joy, & rest in peace, and triumph in perswasion. Rom 8.6.

S. *Whereof is the soul thus perswaded?*

M. Of the love of God unto us in Jesus Christ, in our election and redemption; that he hath loved & given himself for us: so that by him being saved from condemnation, we shal be crowned with him in glory for evermore.

S. *Who worketh this perswasion?* Joan 3.16 Heb. 2. 9. Rom 8.16.17

M. The Spirit of God, which searcheth the deep things of God.

S. *Have not Gods children that sense at all times of this perswasion?* 2 Cor. 1. 10

M. No.

S. *When is it felt then?*

M. At some times only, or when it pleaseth him to reveal himself, for his own glory, and our comfort, according to his own good will.

S. *Have not all the children of God alike measure of feeling?* 1 Joan 2. 12

M. No.

S. *What if all ones life-time he never hath felt any such sense, as you speak of, may he therefore conclud that he is one of those in whom the holy Spirit dwelleth not?*

M. That followeth not, that he should reason thus: I feel not, nor ever felt the joys of the Spirit, therefore he is not within me, and I shall never feel the same. This is a false conclusion. The holy Spirit may be in one (as it was in Lam. 3. 1.

a whole church ) even then when he feeleth hardneſs of heart, terrors, and doubting.

1 Sa. 27. 1 Sam. 27. Was not the Spirit of God in thoſe Saints, who do complain, and demand
Ps. 119. 53. of God thus; *O Lord, why haſt thou made us to erre from thy waies; and hardned our hearts from thy fear?* Was not the holy Spirit in the Prophet *David*, who ſuffered the terrors of God from his youth with doubting of his life?

*S. Yet declare what that ſtay is which ſhould uphold one in ſuch a temptation?*

*M.* Firſt, to look unto God: Next, unto our own heart.

Rom. 8. 28 *S. What is to be conſidered concerning Gods part?*

M. Firſt, that all things (as the Scripture ſpeaketh) work together for the beſt unto thoſe who love God. Next, that God cometh when he will, chiefly
Mat. 10. 30 in our moſt need. 3. That God hath all the hairs of our head numbred, ſo that nothing cometh to paſs without his gracious providence: And thus muſt we aſſure our ſelves, that it is his bleſſed
Ps. 54. 7. Exo. 34. 6. wil to hide himſelf from us for a little. 4. We muſt remember that God is mercy and wiſdom it ſelf; and that mercy moveth his Majeſty to give his preſence but wiſdom directeth that preſence, as he thinketh moſt expedient to his glory and thy good. So that he is but fooliſh who fretteth in impatiency, becauſe

cause God cometh not unto him at his pleasure, seing he (who is wisdom it self) knoweth best his own time. Lastly, we must remember that Gods will in thus leaving us, is to try whether without feeling we can in faith believe his promises, resting and waiting patiently upon him in humility until he come.

2 Kn 6.13

Deut. 8.10 Jam. 1.2 Psal. 40.19

*S. What should he considered concerning our own heart?*

*M.* First, to mark if we find a want of Gods presence, discerning an absence. 2. We must mark whether this absence doth grieve us. 3. Mark if we hunger & thirst for his presence, 4. We must be sure that either we use the means of the Word and Prayer, or at least have a desire to the same, suffering others to do for us that we are not able to do. Last of all, we must try whether we have resolved to wait in hope, resting upon his Promises, in patience, with a constant desire until he come.

Cant. 8.1.2 Psal. 10.12 and 42.

Ann. 84.2.

Isai. 8.17 and 25.9. Heb. 2.3

*S. But seing the Saints of God have not still alike measure of feeling, show (as near as you are able) what is the greatest measure of feeling they find in this life, and the least measure they attain unto?*

*M.* The greatest measure is, when one is ravished with an unspeakable presence of God, so that the senses of the body are not felt, but overcome with that fulness, which then the soul receiveth, as Paul was ravished: or by an extasie

3 Cor. 2.12

Rev. 1. 10. Acts 10. 3 taſie of revelation and viſions, as befel unto *Peter*, and the Prophets: or when the preſence of God is felt in the Word, either read or preached, or in prayer, that it filleth the ſoul with an unſpeakable joy, & a wonderful peace of conſcience which none can underſtand but he who feeleth the ſame. Again, the leaſt meaſure which the Saints feel, is either under terror, or in the times of peace.

Acts 4. 31.

*S. What is the leaſt meaſure which the ſoul attaineth under terror?*

*M.* The eſtate of the party muſt be conſidered, if he hath been effectually called or not.

*S. What is the diſpoſition of the child of God under terror, who hath never been called, but for the preſent is a patient in the act of calling?*

*M.* Bitterneſs, doubting, terror in the feeling of ſin and wrath; yet there is a kind of weak deſire, with a hope (although weak) raiſed by the holy Spirit, to wait for better.

Act. 8. 21. 29, 38.

*S. In ſuch an eſtate how is the ſoul ſupported?*

2 Cor. 12. 9.

*M.* By a ſecret & powerful preſence of God, although for the preſent it be not felt.

*S. What is that which maintaineth this preſence?*

Jer. 17. 7. Micah. 7.

*M.* Grace to ſeek grace, grace to languiſh for grace, and grace to wait in hope until God come.

S.

*S. If the child of God have been called, & have tasted how gracious the Lord is, what is his disposition under terror?*

*M.* He is possessed, either with a blind terror, or with a terror proceeding of guiltiness.

*S. What do you call a blind terror?*

*M.* When one is smitten with a confused fear, not knowing the cause, nor wherefore.

*S. What is the disposition of the child of God in such an estate?* Psal. 77. 4. Lam. 3. 18.

*M.* The soul is stupified, dashed, and amazed, almost devoured and swallowed up with the fear. Next, there remaineth a certain memory of the presence of God once felt. Lastly, the soul is secretly supported by the Spirit of God, to wait, so that for all this it dispaireth not finally.

*S. But what if the fear proceed of guiltiness?*

*M.* First. God giveth grace to pray for remission of sins. 2. He melteth the heart for offending of him. 3. When we cannot sorrow with tears, there will be languishing sighs 4. The remembrance of by-past experience, yieldeth some comfort. Lastly (though at some times scarce there be any hope felt) yet the soul will wait for comfort. 1 Sam. 7. 5. Hos. 1. 2. Lam. 1. 22. Psal. 4. 1.

*S. Shew then what is the least measure of feeling which the child of God hath in the time of this peace?*

Isai. 61. 17 Lamen. 1. 18. 13. 16 M. A sense of the hardness of his heart which he cannot possibly get softned; a sense of impenitency, infidelity, blindness of mind, deadness of spirit; an inability to strive against the heart, and the evil disposition thereof, with a spiritual battel, only there may remain some weak desire of a better disposition, a smal kind of discontentment with the present estate of the soul, with now and then some heavy faint stoln sighs, look up unto God for some help.

And 3. 17. 18. 19.

*S. What is the cause that God will have his Saints to feel such terrors and stings of conscience?*

M. First, that they may know that sin is bitter and fearful. 2. That they may understand that God is angry against all sin, and hath treasures of everlasting wrath ready to be poured out upon impenitent sinners. 3. That thereby the Saints may learn to hate and detast sin so much the more. 4. That they may resolve to follow after holiness, striving to eschew the garment spotted with the flesh. 5. That so much the more dearly they may love Christ Jesus, who hath washed & redeemed them from their sins, and that most terrible wrath which burneth for evermore.

Psal. 1. 35 Lam. 3. 29 Heb. 12. 1 Jud. 23. Psal. 1. 6.

*S. What is the cause that God will have his Saints to feel hardness of heart, and the miserable estate of their souls?*

M. First to make them understand how

how barren, dead, filthy leppers they are by nature through the corruption of sin. 2. That in this feeling of themselves they may be humbled, and truly acknowledge their misery, in shaming and condemning themselves, that God in such a sensible confession may be glorified. 3. To make them the more gladly and joyfully long for the coming of Christ. That when they do feel, they may learn to discern how precious a heavenly presence is: so ever thereafter so much the more careful to intreat the same, & more thankful for all manner of comforts. 5. That the Saints may know and understand, that albeit they find sometimes God working within them, as indeed they do, yet that the strength of corruption is so great, that it quencheth these sweet and holy feelings; as also, that we may know our weakness and infirmities to be such, whilst we walk in this tabernacle of clay, that we are not able to retain a constant spiritual presence. Last of all, that we may afterwards pitty, and be so much the more merciful unto others in the like estate.

5. *What may we learn hereof?*

M. First, that one sense and feeling is not enough, but God in mercy must multiply feeling after feeling, & grace after grace. Next, that we should long to be freed of this body of sin & death,

to be clothed with our heavenly husband in glory, there immediatly to see the face of God, there to feel an everlasting presence without any absence.

*S. Is it possible that God can be in the heart, when we feel the hardnes of our hearts?*

M. It may be so.

*S. How may that be known?*

M. First, by the feeling of the evil. 2. By the extream sorrow, heavines and discontentment for that evil disposition. 3. By that remaining desire, to have the soul truely touched with a sensible presence of Gods holy Spirit, with a desire to strive, when we are not able to strive.

*S. What manner of stamp leaveth this light in the heart (being now departed) in the time of hardnes of heart.*

M. First, it confirmeth and setleth the soul to rest upon that God whose presence was once felt. Next, it maketh the soul stilbold to draw near unto God. Further, the memory of that former presence bringeth comfort in temptation, because we have felt such light as hath sanctified & renewed the mind, will and affections. Again, it maketh a man marvellous & humble, to have life to love holines, righteousnes, to make choice of God, to be his sole pleasure & delight, as possible he may, to loath

this present life, & the pleasures thereof, to long to be dissolved, to be with Christ: to walk as a stranger in this world: to have his conversation in heaven, by faith and hope, as the heir and Son of God. The remaining stamp of this light also maketh the child of God rejoyce when he seeth God honored, and contrarily, exceeding sorrowful, when he seeth him dishonored. Ps. 19. 12

*S. What is the cause that this smal remaining light, hath, or can have such a stamp, and effectual working?*

M. Because this light once shining in the soul, draweth it so near unto God, and God unto it, letting it see & feel clearly in that light, that it is beloved of God; which when the soul once by a strong apprehension, feeleth, it answereth God with a sweet love again; so that this sense of the love of God once shed abroad in the heart, perswading, comforting, and sanctifying the same, acquainteth the soul with God, so that neither can he forsake the same, or it finally forsake him: remaining alwaysfad (at least when he is grieved) joyful when he is glorified, either in mercy, or in justice. Ps. 27. 8. 1 Joh. 4. 13 Rom. 5. 5. Jer. 32. 40

*S. Is it possible for the child of God to fall into such hainous presumptuous sins, as wicked sinners do?* Gen. 6. 10. 1 Eph. 2. 3 Tit. 3. 3

M. It is possible.

*S. What is the cause thereof?*

M. Because that the same vileness is in the nature of the child of God, which is in the profanest reprobate.

Corin: 33. 9. 11. *S. I grant the child of God before he be called effectually, may go one for a while in as evil a course as any reprobate. But can the child of God who hath been effectually called, fall from his feeling and holiness, in such sins as maketh the reprobat damned for ever?*

M. Most certainly he may.

*S. How are you able to confirm your judgement?*

M. In place of light he may be covered with darkness: In place of feeling and perswasion, there may come deadness and doubting: In place of joy, terror: for softness of heart, hardness: In place of holiness, much profaneness.

*S. Explain your meaning in so saying?*

M. It is plain that there was in *Job* terror and doubting: and in the Prophet *David*, sense of wrath, and grievous fears of wrath: and in *Solomon*, a strange & fearful declining from good, and a woful practice of evil.

Job 3. 11. 12 and 6. 4. Psal. 40. 2. 3. Kings 11. 2. 6. 7. 8.

*S. Can the child of God altogether lose the comfort of feeling, and be oppressed with terror?*

M. Yea, truly, and that so far, that the sense of sin, and that the wrath of God will over-burden the soul: and *David* testifieth, when he saith, *thy hand is heavy upon me day and night, and my moisture*

Ps. 32. 4.

moisture is turned into the drought of Summer. And again, *There is nothing sound in my flesh, because of thine anger; neither is there rest in my bones, because of my sin; for mine iniquities are gone over my head, and as a mighty burden are too heavy for me. My wounds are putrified and corrupt, because of my foolishness. My reins are full of burnings, and there is nothing sound in my flesh.* Yea, he further testifieth, that the indignation of God lay upon him. Again he saith, *Thy indignation goeth over me, and thy fear hath cut me off.* Ps. 38. 3 & 5. Ps. 88. 7. 16.

8. Yet declare further, how far may the child of God be cast down (feeling of God's absence) being in continual vexation by the apprehension of his anger, yet continuing the child of God?

M. First, the child of God may be driven to such an extreamity and narrow pinch, that (to his feeling, God hideth his face from him) the Lord rejecteth his soul; and when he roareth, crying out, that he shutteth forth his prayer. Next to his sense and feeling, he will feel the God of Heaven to be his enemy, pulling him in pieces, causing the arrows of his quiver to enter into his reins, filling him with bitterness, & causing his soul to be far from peace. Lam. 3. 8.

Again, the child of God to his feeling, may through the affliction of his soul, be at the brink of dispair, and at the point of death; yea, and from his Ps. 88. 15.

youth ſuffered terrors, doubting of his life.

Laſtly, the child of God throgh the manifold temptations of his ſoul, will be ſo dejected, that when he prayeth his ſpirit will be full of anguiſh & vexation, & agony, thinking that God hath either forgotten to be merciful, or that he hath ſhut up his tender mercies in diſpleaſure, that he hath overthrown and deſtroyed him on every ſide: that being gone; God hath kindled his wrath againſt him.

*S. Can the child of God after he hath felt terror, become ſo ſenſleſs, that he will be hardned from the fear, and aw of the majeſty of God?*

M. He may as the Prophet *Iſaiah* teſtifieth, when he ſaith, *why haſt thou made us to erre from thy ways, and hardned our heart from thy fear?* As alſo experience of the Saints of God in all ages witneſs the ſame.

*S. How far may the child of God after his effectual calling, run riotouſly in profane looſneſs?*

M. Firſt, he may ſtray and fall away in his affections, of love and hatred. Secondly, he may looſe the reins in outward affections.

*S. How may the child of God degenerate in his affections?*

M. Firſt, his love and obedience may grow cooler unto Chriſt Jeſus, his hatred

tred

tred likewise of sin may be diminished, and the love of righteousness removed a little, and yet remain the child of God. As we see in *David*, a man after Gods own heart; and *Peter*, Christs dear Apostle, who thus for a while did fall away in their affections. Mat. 26.

*S. What are the degrees by which the child of God cometh unto this disordered ryot, and loosness in his affections?*

M. First, he suffereth the presence of God to go forth of his heart, and the mind to be blinded. 2. He leaveth off seriously either to seek God, or to mourn for his absence. 3. The vail and snares of hardness of heart thus cometh upon him. 4. The heart becometh senseless and dead. 5. The party thus lying open unto temptation unarmed, sin deceiveth, with the inticements thereof, defiling the affections, perswading them to fulfil the lusts of the flesh. 6. The sense of heaven and of hell become strangely decayed. And lastly, there may well abide a light to convince and convict the conscience thus defiled, but no power to resist sin in the act. Jer. 1. 4. 5. 12. 3. 4. H. 4. 2. 3.

*S. What should we learn from hence?* Hab. 4. 2. 13. & 3. 15.

M. First, to beware we lose not out peace and communion with God. 2. To shun hardness of heart, & blindness of mind. 3. Not to suffer the conscience to be senseless without feeling, but ever

Heb. 5. 12. to retain a sight & sense of sin, and the terror of Gods wrath for the same, with some measure of remorse & godly sorrow. 4. To be watchful, that the vile bewitching pleasures of sin benum not the conscience, making it consent unto such abomination: for if we so do, the strength of sin wil overcome us; and by the righteous judgement of God we shall fall into some great danger, which although it bring us not to hel, shal be a stain in the conscience, & as a thorn in our side all our life long.

1 Sam. 12. 11

*S. Is it possible for the child of God to fall into such gross sins, as those who are ordained unto destruction: the sin against the holy Ghost excepted.*

2 Sam. 11. 4 Gen. 19. 23 and 9. 11. Mat. 26. 7 Gen. 4. 15

M. Nothing more certain: he may fall into the same sins, and yet be not castaway. *Esau* a reprobat, was a fornicator. *David* an elect, did commit adultery. *Lot* an elect, was overtaken with drunkenness & incest, so also was *Noah* with wine: *Peter* an elect denyed Christ: & *Joseph* did swear by the life of *Pharaoh*: so that he hath no freedom (if Gods Spirit be absent) more then these, not to fal into such gross sins: the sin against the holy Ghost excepted.

*S. What is the sin against the holy Ghost*

A discovery of the sin against the hol: Ghost. Mat. 12. 31 Mat. 3. 29 Bak. 12. 10

M. There are six names given unto this great sin. 1. It is called a sin against the holy Ghost. 2. A blasphemy, an impious blasphemy, extreamly impious.

3. A:

3. A sin that never shall be forgiven. 4. A falling away, an Apostacy. 5. A sin against knowledge and conscience, in great light, in despite of the Spirit of grace. 6. A sin unto death.

S. *Why is it so diversly named?*

M. Because God in his Word hath been pleased so to express the same unto us: yet if we list to look more nearly into the same, we shall find sundry causes. First, it is called *A sin against the holy Ghost*; not in respect of the substance of the holy Ghost; for the essence of the three persons, is all in one and the same God: nor yet in respect of the Person of the holy Ghost; for whatsoever is done against any of the Persons, is done against all three: but it is said to be done against the holy Spirit, because done against the immediate effect, work and office of the holy Spirit, to wit, against the shining light of the said Spirit: this light indeed is an effect of the Father & of the Son, as well as of the holy Spirit: yet it is said to be against the holy Ghost only, because it fighteth against a special immediat work of his, against that light and work of grace kindled by him. 2. It is called *A blasphemy, an impious blasphemy, extreamly wicked.* There be divers blasphemies, a blasphemy of men, a blasphemy directly against the Son of man; a blasphemy, impious, wicked,

Heb. 6. 4. and 10. 10. 1 Ioan. 2. 6. Mat. 21. 31.

Mt. 7. 31. & 2. 3. & 11. 8. Ti. 3. 13.

hed ; such as was *Pauls* blasphemy, which, because (as he testifieth) it was not done wittingly, he was received into mercy ; because he did it ignorantly. But this sin against the holy Ghost, is a blasphemy exceeding wicked, surpassing his; because it is done with extream despite against a manifest con-
Luke 11.10 vincing light. 3. It is called, *A sin which never shall be forgiven*: not from the nature of the sin, as if there could be any surpassing Gods mercy (for a finite creature is not able to commit that sin, which an infinite God in mercy is not more able to pardon.) But it is said to be irremissible , because there is no mercy appointed for it, because there is no repentance to be given to such a one , and such a one shall never beg for mercy. Yea, I may further add, that the fury of such a one who committeth this sin, is so great against Christ, that suppose he might have mercy by re-
Heb. 6.6. pentance , yet he would not have it. 4. It is called, *A falling away, or an apostasie* ; because it is not only a simple apostasie of a part, or for a time, nor yet an epilepsie, or a spirit of slumber, but also a total final apostasie. 5. It is called, *A sin against conscience & knowledge, with great despite against the Spirit of grace*: There is no man but he sinneth against knowledge & conscience, So these pillars of the Church, *Peter* and

and *David* (before him) sinned, with many more; yet all without despite: therefore take away despite, malice, & extream despite, & so long there will be no sin against the holy Ghost. Lastly, it is called, *A sin unto death*; because all sorts of sin do follow it, corporal & spiritual, first and second, temporal and eternal. Note. 1. 1 Jo. 5. 16.

*S. Where doth this greatest sin chiefly make residence, in those who commit the same?*

M. In the heart and mind.

*S. How may it be judged of those?*

M. By six properties, or effects, three in the mind, and three in the heart.

*S. Declare which be they?*

M. In the mind, it is done against all sorts of light. First, against the general light of all the powers of the mind. 2. Against the particular special light of the conscience. 3. Against the spiritual light, that light of the Spirit, Word, & Grace. Secondly, in the heart. 1. It must be done willingly, with a full consent (as the Apostle speaketh) for if we sin willingly, &c. 2. There must be malice in it, as *verse* 29. where such a one is brought in despising the Spirit of grace &c. 3. There must be the extreamity of malice in the same, because such a one treadeth under foot the Son of God, & trampleth under the bloud of the New Testament, as if it were dogs bloud,

esp-

crucifying Christ unto himself, & making a mock of him: all which are actions of despite, and extream desperate malice.

*S. What principal qualities must he needs be endued with, who can commit this sin?*

M. He must have a great light and knowledge: for then it is properly said to be committed, when a mans illumination is so great, that he cannot be ignorant (though he would) what he doth; and yet for all this, will wittingly, and willingly of a desperate malice, oppugn, impugn Christ and his truth more and more, persecuting the same with final obstinacy, to that end only, to withstand and despite him, so that then they become of a devilish nature, or rather very devils, for still the further one wadeth into this sin (until the consumation thereof) the more he partaketh both of the knowledge and malice of the devil: As the *Pharisees* &c. of all others the worst: for some there were who knew Christ in his cratch, some sucking his mother very young, some nailed on the cross: others again could not know him, no not in the greatest light and glory of his miracles. A third sort he had to do with, who knew him clearly by the light of the Spirit, and of his wonderful works; and yet maliciously spake, and did against

Heb 6. 7.

Note.

gainſt their knowledge, blaſphem, ſcoff & mock the Son of God and theſe were the *Phariſees*; whom falling into this blaſphemy againſt the holy Spirit, Chriſt reproveth and threatneth.

*S. To how many ſorts of people is it incident to commit this ſin?*

M. As I take it, to two ſorts only.

S. *Which be they?*

M. Firſt, ſuch who having given there names unto Chriſt, taking upon them a profeſſion of him and his truth, yet in the time of temptation do make defection, continueth in the ſame, until they fall into an univerſal Apoſtaſie, ſo perfecting this ſin. 2. There hath been another ſort, who knew the truth clearly, by a general, ſpecial, ſpiritual, convincing light, not taking upon them the profeſſion thereof, nor the names of Chriſtians, who notwithſtanding that they were indued with a great light of the truth, yet did they with all their might, in great malice impugn the ſame, perſecuting with great obſtinacy Chriſt & his members. Such were the *Phariſees*.

Of the firſt ſort, who made the defection, we read of *Alexander* the Copper-ſmith, *Julian* the Apoſtat, *Porphyrie* &c. Of the other, as I have ſaid, were the *Phariſees*. For they knew that an unclean ſpirit could not work a true miracle, ſeing every true miracle muſt

be

be wrought by an infinite, not bounded Power (the whole power of hel being limited) which is only of God: Therefore to aſcribe ſuch miraculous works to *Belzebub*, an unclean Spirit (derogating the glory of the Son of God and taking away the fruits and efficacy of the Spirit) was in them as valide, and pernicious a blaſphemy as could be: ſince all the devils in hell (their powers being joyned) are not able to work one true miracle: for by them Chriſt was declared to be the Almighty God, manifeſted in our fleſh: Juſtly then were they condemned of blaſphemy againſt the holy Spirit, becauſe their ſin had in it no infirmity, but was altogether of obſtinat, ſettled, well adviſed malice: whence from them this ſin hath the name of blaſphemy, as from the firſt ſort of profeſſors (who have made defection) it is called *Apoſtacy*.

1 Tim. 3.

Note:

*S. What do you call, or how do you define this Apoſtaſie from the truth?*

M. It is not an Apoſtaſie from a natural, moral, or civil truth, from a truth in theſe outward things (for which men ſo ſtrive) but it is an Apoſtaſie from a ſuper-natural truth, from a truth concerning our everlaſting ſalvation, and the lively faith in Chriſt Jeſus.

2. It is not only a particular Apoſtaſie from any piece or pareel of this divine truth, but it is a general Apoſtaſie from

from the whole word of this truth, which we call the Goſpel, and conſequently a manifeſt defection from the living God, who in Chriſt Jeſus was manifeſted in our nature. Neither is it a partial definition with a part of the ſoul only, with the mind or heart only, but it is a total defection of the whole ſoul; yea, not only of the whole ſoul, but alſo of the whole man, both ſoul and body. 3. It is a final defection, a de- Heb. 6:
fection without recovery; ſuch an Apoſtaſie, as *Heb.* 6. is called, *a falling away*; ſo that whoſoever falleth truly into this ſin, falleth away without recovery: yet men do not come into this univerſal Apoſtaſie all at once, but by little and little, & proceſs of time. For firſt, they chaſe away and baniſh their whole light; they waſte and make ſhipwrack of conſcience; they deſperatly harden their whole hearts, until they become, as it were, incarnate devils, ſatanized in a wonderful manner, until they match *Belzebub* himſelf, in their deſperate deſpite & malice: ſo that there is no ſin which maketh a man ſo pitifully to deteſt Chriſt, as this ſin; Note.
yea, with all ſuch extream hatred, that although he might, he will receive no benefit of his propitiatory and expiatory ſacrifice.

*5. What is the cauſe that this ſin is ſo ſeverely puniſhed?*

M.

M. Amongſt other cauſes, becauſe it is ſo free of infirmity and ſudden fits and paſſions (which other ſins are not free of) & ſo ful of deſperate, malicious, well adviſed malice, ſcraping forth all light, baniſhing all conſcience, fighting againſt the heavens ſo far, that becauſe it cannot attain unto Chriſt who now in heaven ſitteth at the right hand of the Father in all glory, it undertaketh to be revenged upon his true members the Militant Church upon earth, which (ſo far as it can) it perſecuteth, oppreſſeth, & by all means rooteth out: ſo that it is juſt with God in his righteous judgement, to have decreed never to give repentance unto the ſame.

*S. By what ſteps or degrees doth this ſin aſcend to the height of impiety?*

M. By four ſteps it aſcends, or rather deſcends towards hell. Firſt, it makes a man do actions againſt his knowledge & conſcience (and that without infirmity, uſual in other ſins) falling from the faith of Chriſt. Next, it makes them to go on forwards in the ſame continually, until they make their partial defection a total, their particular a general, and their general a final Apoſtaſie. Then further, it maketh a man deviliſh, malicious, deſpiteful, to grow in malice againſt Chriſt, and his members more and more. Laſtly, if (near finiſhed) it be the ſin againſt the holy Ghoſt in-

Indeed, it maketh a man violently break forth in all ſorts of fearful and terrible perſecutions, in all kinds of blaſphemies, & groſs viſible actual ſins; all murthers, burnings, oppreſſions, witchcrafts, ſorceries, extirpations. Finally, & what not? to that end only that it may reſiſt, oppoſe, and deſpite, and fight againſt the power, effect, graces, and convincing light of the Spirit.

*S. May not one who in Gods ſight and decree is choſen unto life, ſeem to begin to fall into this ſin, and yet be called back both from proceeding therein, and finiſhing the ſame?*

M. As I take it, he may: for we know *Manaſſeh*, the ſon of good *Hezekiah* King of *Judah*, ruling in *Jeruſalem*, the place of Gods glory and worſhip, in the midſt of a glorious Prieſthood, many hundred years old (whereof he could not be ignorant) did notwithſtanding, abominably ſin, and ſeem to go on in the finiſhing of this ſin for a long time, over-turning & extinguiſhing (to his power) Gods worſhip: building again thoſe high places which his father had caſt down and aboliſhed; making a grove, and worſhipping the whole hoaſt of heaven; building altars contrary to Gods commandment) in the houſe of the Lord, & the two utter courts thereof, for the whole hoaſt of heaven; cauſing his ſons to paſs through 2 King. 21

the

the fire, giving himself to witchcraft, and sorcery, to use familiar spirits and sooth-sayers, setting up the image of his grove in the house of the Lord; filling & causing *Jerusalem* to swim from corner to corner with innocent blood: finally, exceeding those exceeding sins of the *Amorits*, yet no cast-away; but at length proved to be the child of God, for all this, *Josephus* also thus writeth of him: *He was so impudent, that he spared not to pollute the very Temple of God, the City & the whole Country: for making his entry in despite of God, he slew afterwards all those who were vertuous men among the Hebrews: and though he had no want of prophets, yet so it is, that he killed every day some, so that Jerusalem was ever flown with blood, &c.*

*Joseph. Antiq. lib. 19 cap. 3.*

Thus far we see one went, and was by the mercy of God called back again. Wherefore no poor Christian (how-soever sinful) not coming near the sins of *Manasseh*, ought not to think he hath committed this sin: yet it is good for all, to flee all sin, chiefly those done with deliberation, against light, knowledge, and conscience: For we know, the further that even *Peter* himself went in *Caiaphas* hall, he swore and forswore, denying Christ so much the more: but it was a great mercy to be called back again: For which, let all in their fears, wish and pray.

S.

*S. What in the mean time must comfort and uphold poor fearful souls who imagine to have committed this sin, therefore forsaking all means?*

M. In my judgement, a better information of their judgements is of great consequence to help to sustain them: For though we yeeld for a while to all they affirm, yet if they say, that they could wish they had not so sinned, certainly then they have not thus sined; or if they fear to be, or fall into this sin, they shal surely never commit this sin. Further, such persons must be demanded of, Whether they be come unto that dispite against Christ, that they would trample upon his bloud, as upon the bloud of a dog? Whether their impious blasphemy be such, that with the *Pharisees*, they do call him *Belzebub*? Whether these foregoing properties of this sin have been in them; to wit, a touched heart, a taste of the powers of the Word of truth, a taste of the powers of the world to come, to be partakers of the Spirit? (whence al such who affirm that their former actions and seeming graces, have only been hypocritical lip-labor, are excluded from possibility to have committed this sin) Whether they have fallen quite away from the Religion? Whether they have renounced their faith in Christ? Whether they

they have impugned & oppreſſed the known truth, yet perſiſting therein, with reſolution ſtill to go on therein? Whether they have fallen againſt knowledge and conſcience? Whether there be no infirmity in their fall? What long time it ſince they have ſo ſinned? Whether or not as yet, they may be reclaimed? Whether now they obſtinatly perſecute Chriſt in his members, ſo far as they are able? Whether they run not with a high mind, in all manner of groſs actual ſin and rebellions? Whether their wickedneſs be ſuch, that (unto their power) they draw others unto the ſame exceſs of ryot with them? Whether their diſeaſe hath been, and is, only in blaſphemies of the mind? and then it is not, nor ſo long can be this great ſin, which burſteth forth (as is proved) in ſtore of all manner of groſs abominable actions? whether if Chriſt were now among us viſibly, they would ſet to their hands, and help to crucifie him again? Whether their temporal be turned into a final Apoſtaſie? (which is only a time for the whole Church to judge thereof.) Finally, whether they be transformed, in a manner, into the very devil, ſo partaking of his light, knowledge, malice, and deviliſh nature? All which properties to be in them, none but by advice of the devil (in the fury of a

ſtrong

strong temptation) will dare to affirm: so that by that time these questions have been pressed, and their contrary, lying, shifting, sophistical answers, objections and evasions, refuted and discovered; it is likely, by the grace of God, and the other means, that the fury of temptation will diminish, and their judgements be somewhat enlightened: since it is a trick in the devil in temptation? chiefly when he is aided by melancholy) to make our least sins our greatest, and our indifferent sins, the sin against the holy Spirit. Therefore now to conclude this point, all such poor sinners who either fear to have committed or to commit this sin, not having the fore-named properties (for some, or a few of them will prove nothing) may chear up their fainting spirits, and lift up their feeble failing hands, and weak knees, making straight steps unto their feet (as the Apostle speaketh) lest that which is halting be turned out of the way. For their sin is far, far, far, and not near this most fearful extreamly implous blasphemy, unto which repentance is denyed. Far from this final Apostasie and wilful malicious sin, against knowledge, and the convincing, cool, well-advised light of conscience. Far, far, & not near this sin unto death, called *The sin against the holy Ghost*, and therefore

fore may, and ought boldly to use all the holy means appointed of God, to attain the assurance of salvation.

*S. But to return to our former purpose, how cometh it to pass that the children of God fall into such grievous sins, grace by the holy Ghost being begun in them?*

Eph. 4. 29. 30. 2

M. Because they nourish not the grace of God, but suffer the power of sin to over-rule them.

*S. After what manner do the degrees of sin grow upon the elect?*

M. First, the mind is blinded, the wil is perverted, & the actions corrupted with the desires of the pleasures of sin. 2. The graces of the holy Spirit are quenched, by the entertaining of worldly lusts. 3. The inward restraining grace being away, & so the heart defiled with uncleanness, the members of the body (which are now become the weapons of unrighteousness) having no power to resist, do yield, and fulfil the will of the flesh.

Rom. 7. 12. 13.

*S. What may we learn from hence?*

M. First to take good heed, and bewar of the first motions of sin. Next, warily to entertain grace, both in flying all occasions of wickedness, and entertaining all holy exercises, thereby preventing hardness of heart, blindness of mind, and deadness of spirit. Further to have a continual battel against the vildness of our inward lusts

Rom. 7. 7. 1 Ta. 5. 22. Jude 23. Gen. 1. 3. Isa. 19. 10. R. 7. 23. 25

Lastly

Castly, although the flesh refuse to fight, yet to be constant, and never give over striving, if it were but one sigh unto God from the sense and burden of corruption.

*S. What is the disposition and state of the child of God, when he sinneth in the aforesaid manner?* Ps. 31. 10. 12. Ro. 8. 1. 3. 4.

M. He is senseless, either of the joys which he once felt, or of the terrors wherewith his soul once was pierced, because he hath quenched the Spirit. Next, the love of sin prevaileth against that love which he formerly had of God. Then the heart is hardned, in which, although there abide a memory of wrath, yet there remaineth no terror to be a bridle to curb and restrain sin. Further, there is a sluggish unwilling carelessness in performance of al spiritual exercises: he hath then no pleasure in prayer, reading or hearing of the Word, &c. Last of all, those smal sins which before he made conscience of, he wil neither account so much of them, nor of greater sins, as before he had of evil thoughts. Rev. 2. 13. 16. 17.

*S. What is the cause hereof?*

M. First, an inward desertion of the Spirit. Next, the tyranny of the flesh in the lusts of it.

*S. What causeth the Spirit of God to withdraw himself?*

M. Sin and impenitency.

*S. What maketh the affections to be thus vile?*

M. First, a distaste of the means of grace. 2. Pleasure in unrighteousness.

*S. Doth the child of God sin as freely, & as senslessly as the wicked & reprobat?*

Ep. 4. 30. M. Before he be called he may.

*S. But after effectual calling, will he sin as freely and loosly without conscience as the wicked?*

M. As concerning the unrenewed part.

*S. How is it possible that the child of God being effectually called, can fall, seing he hath the Spirit of God?*

M. By reason of the weakness of
Ps. 4. 15. grace, and strength of corruption. Then because the child of God suffereth the heart to go loose, without
Prov. 4. 23 laying any imposition and burden upon the same, either of terror or inward strife, by holy exercises of the mind, or outward lawful imployments of an ordinary calling.

*S. What necessity is there of this burdening the heart;*

Mat. 5. 19 M. Because the heart is never idle
G. 6. 5. but in continual motion: therefore when we overcome it not with good things (it being now bent unto all evil) or when in striving we are not equal unto it, it overcometh, making us to fall shamfully.

*S. Doth the child of God for all this*

sin

*sin so freely, that he scapeth in the mean time unchallenged?*

M. No, for in the time of his sinning, he hath a reproving accuser within him.* Rom. 2. 11

*S. What in this doth the renewed part*

M. It will not suffer him to take his all swinge therein, but he is displeased with it. It admonisheth, but is not heard. It opposeth it self, but hath no force to control, command, or restrain but is overcome with the old flouds of filthiness of the unrenewed part: and thus it lyeth as it were smothered, drowned, and quenched, and so the spirit cometh to be grieved. Esa. 30. 11.

*S. Now tell me if the child of God can fall after that he hath received great comfort?*

M. He may, for *Peter*, after that he was over-shadowed on the Mount, did fall grievously, denying and for-swearing Christ. And also afterwards when he had received a far greater measure of the Spirit, did not only dissemble himself, but also drew *Barnabas* in the same hypocrisie. Gal. 2. 12.

*S. Can the child of God, after that he hath been heavily cast down with terror, fall again?*

M. He may: so *Ezechias*, after he had been greatly terrified, did fall; so did *David* in numbring the people. I 39. 16. 1 Chr. 21. 1. 1 Cor. 10. 11.

*S. Why suffereth the Lord his Saints to fall thus?*

M. First, to teach him that standeth to take heed lest he fal. 2. To shew unto the Saints their own weakness. 3. To teach them to entertain and cherish God carefully in their hearts. 4. To make his children earnest in begging the grace of sanctification (yea, above the grace of feeling) that their election may be confirmed so much the surer unto them thereby.

S. *Doth the Lord suffer his Saints after they have fallen, to sleep in sin?*

M. Not always, but in the end wakeneth them.

Gen. 41: 21, 22. S. *What is the first thing which God worketh in them at their wakening?*

M. He worketh in them: first, sight, secondly, a sense of sin: lastly, a fear of punishment.

2 Chr. 33. 27, 28. S. *What manner of sight worketh he?*

M. First, he letteth them see the hainousness of their sins, in having offended so gracious, dreadful, and terrible a Majesty. Then he aggravateth their sins so much the more, in that it was against the light of conscience and feeling, after their effectual calling: therefore the wrath of God to be so much the more incensed against their sin. Lastly, he showeth them to be guilty, and by their own confessions, judge and condemn them to be worthy of hell fire.

Isa. 31. 8, 10 Ezek. 36. 31 Psal. 85. 2, 3 4, 5, 6, 7.

S. *What manner of sense is that the*

*child of God hath, being thus wakened?*

M. Firſt, a ſenſible torment: Next, an abſence of the holy Spirit: and his ſin ſtanding up betwixt him and the mercy of God.

S. *What manner of torment is that which he ſuffers?*

M. The torture racking conſcience drawing him before Gods tribunal, accuſing, convicting, and condemning him, beginning to be a terrible executioner, in vexing and toſſing the ſoul with, the Intollerable ſting of an unſpeakeable wrath. Pſ. 88. 15, 16. & 3. 4

S. *What in the mean time doth the ſoul in ſuch an eſtate?*

M. It ſuffereth under intollerable weights and burdens, doubtings, heavy conflicting battels, not being able to find any iſſue.

S. *What manner of fear is that which the child of God hath been wakened?*

M. A fear of eternal rejection from God. Next, a fear that his effectual calling (which he once imagined to be good) was but counterfeit. Further, a fear that the holy Spirit will never come again, either to comfort or ſanctifie him in that meaſure he formerly enjoyed it. Laſtly, a fear that either his ſin will not be forgiven him; or at leaſt will bring ſome great ſhame and puniſhment upon him. Pſ. 7. 3. & 143.

S. *In this eſtate, what is the diſpo-*

*ſition of the child of God towards ſin?*

Jer. 30. 27 38 & 42. 6. M. He wiſheth from the bottom his heart he had not ſo ſinned. Next, he hath indignation at ſin; not ſo much for the torment he feeleth, as that he hath offended ſo good and gracious a God: yea, he abhorreth himſelf for his ſin.

*S. What learn we from this manner of wakening of Gods Saints?*

M. Firſt, that God will not ſuffer his children to ſleep for ever in their ſins. Next, that ſin hath a moſt terrible
Ez. 42. 32 fearful countenance. Laſtly, that though ſin lurk for a while; and ſeem pleaſant to the taſte, yet it bringeth with it the extreameſt ſorrow in the world: yea, if God but waken any for an evil thought, it proveth more fearful than all the torments in the earth.

*S. Which be the ſins that trouble the child of God moſt?*

M. Thoſe ſins which he committeth after his effectual calling.

*S. But will the Lord ſuffer his children to ly ſtill thus under terror and doubting?*

M. No.

*S. What, and how worketh he in his Saints, after that in this manner he hath beaten them down?*

Jer. 31. 18 19 Ezr. 36. 31 Zach. 12. 10, 11, 12 M. Firſt, he ſofteneth the heart in a bitter ſorrow, in the abundance of the ſpirit of prayer, and mourning,

to pour out the heart before him with many tears and ſtrong crys. Next by degrees in proceſs of time, he poureth out, firſt a hope, then a ſenſe [illegible] perſwaſion of the remiſſion of ſins, clearing the ſoul from guiltineſs, through his moſt precious bloud, all-ſufficient merits, and ſatisfaction, being apprehended and applyed by faith, which he then increaſeth and ſtrengtheneth to ſee and lay hold upon the promiſes of life. Then hereupon he bringeth comfort, and more aſſured perſwaſion unto the ſoul, confirming and ſetling the weary and troubled heart with the ſpirit of peace Laſtly, he giveth the trembling ſoul a free acceſs unto his countenance, with boldneſs to draw near unto the Throne of Grace, and cry, *Abba, Father.* So that mark how fearful it was before of his dreadful Majeſty, and how it was perplexed in doubting of his love, it will now find him a thouſand times more comfortable and more ſweet, in pouring out of his love, and the ſenſe thereof, by the Spirit of Adoption, and joy of the holy Ghoſt.

pſ. 143 8. 9 10. 11.

Heb 4. 16. Rom. 8. 15. Gal. 4. 6

*S. What fruits bringeth this forth?*

M. In reſpect of God, the child of God will love him better than ever he did before. The Lord will alſo be moſt precious in his eyes: and the promiſe will be as meat and drink unto the

pſ. 116 1. 2 3. 4. 5.

for it. Next, regard of sin, he will hate
Job 42. 6 and abhor it more than ever he did,
and will be more warry of the deceitfulness thereof, that it snare and entice him not in the like manner again. Further, he will abhor himself for any sin, accounting of himself as of the
Job 3. 3. most base and miserable wretch in the world. Lastly, he will labour instantly in season and out of season, to make a covenant with the eyes, the tongue, and all the members of the body, watching also diligently over the heart and affections, that (as in former times) they riot not in lasciviousness.

*S. Yet I would know, whether one feeling the bitterness of his sin, and mourning for the same, and having a taste of the forgivenness thereof, with a full purpose never to do so any more, by Gods grace: if yet for all this, he can fall into the same sin again?*

M. Yea certainly, in some sort.

*S. How so?*

M. First, because in men there is a predominant sin of natural inclination, which hath more power over a man than any other sin, which cleaveth as close unto him as the skin of his
Heb. 12. 1. body. This sin, for the most part, leadeth and over-ruleth a man: well it may be, that with much grief, sorrow and mourning, and with many tears he may obtain grace, to see, hate,

strive

strive against it, and in part to slay it; but do what he can, he will hardly get it abolished. Again, because Satan the cruel enemy of our salvation, still provoketh the child of God, chiefly with the intricements of that overruling sin, working after this manner: First, he watcheth diligently for an opportunity to catch us, when we are not upon our guards; or when (being careless) we think and sooth our selves that we have sufficiently overcome & mastred such a sin, and that we shall not be troubled therewith any more. Then having thus at unawars surprised us (we being unarmed, and not able to resist) his inticements (aided by our inward foes) reenter into us again by degrees, so causing us to fall by little and little. For first, he casteth a fair smooth vail over the predominant sin of natural inclination, making it either (if it be possible) to appear no sin at al, or at least to be but a final light, trifling thing, and not out of measure sinful, as indeed it is: after which (frailty not being able to resist) the affections are defiled, inflamed, and set on fire, with a love to the inticing object of seeming delight: which being done (the flesh & carnal reason now bearing the sway) he never leaveth until he cause the child of God to fall into the same sin again, unless the Lord by special grace sustain him.

Luk. 22. 31.

1 Cor. 2. 12.

Rom. 7. 13.

S. *VVhat moveth that cruel enemy to assault Gods children in that terrible manner?*

M. The hatred which he hath; first against God, and then against man, because of God. Next, because above all things he would gladliest have one to fall away who have obtained grace: For this he thinketh is his glory, to disgrace the work of the holy Spirit in us, and to cause the name and holy Religion of God to be blasphemed: As also that he may brag (if it were possible) of his victory over the power and grace of God. And further, be-
Epist. 5. 8. cause there is rooted in him an unvisible desire of the destruction of all the creatures of God, but especially of his elected children.

S. *VVhat lesson ariseth from hence?*

M. First to take no truce with sin,
Ps. 69. 10 & 33. 22. because this cruel enemy entreth into the soul thereby: For dallying with sin, is (as it were) a door for him to enter in us; the soul then being the place of his residence. 2. To labour
Iam. 3. 17 diligently, and narrowly to find out all our sins, chiefly that predominant of natural inclination. 3. We must labour to be in a continual battel always with all our sins, giving them no rest: nay, not so much as suffering an evil thought to enter into our mind, with peace, but to surpass, pursue and

cru-

crucifie it presently, by lifting up the heart unto Christ, and striving against it. 4. To be sure that we repent us of all our sins, truly, as often, and so many as possibly we can remember, craving pardon for those we cannot call to mind: and as our eyes are opened, by which we see more and more, to be sure we purge all out, conceal nothing from God: so making a clear conscience. 5. To be at a continual battel with all our evil affections, pressing them down with a continual remorse and sorrow, with faith in the obedience, merits, death, and resurrection of Christ Jesus. 6. To watch continually and beware that the strength of sin in a sudden inflame not so the powers of the soul, that they break out like fire in the whole man. 7. To be sure, above all things, we continue a most earnest constant fight against our predominant sin; being wary, as we love our life and peace, that we suffer not the least motions thereof to enter in our souls, because this (above all other sins) is the traitor that will soonest deceive us, under show of friendship. For if we suffer the thoghts thereof to encroach upon us, it will pass our power to restrain the same, until (to our extream sorrow) it have burst forth in action. Further, to labour to fill the heart, both with the

Ps. 32. 5

1 Cor. 6. 13

Ibid.

Rom. 7. 21

Word,

Word, and with a sense of our continual guiltiness, because we drink iniquity continually, like unto water: endevouring therefore to let the fear of God so possess the soul, as to terrifie it from every little sin, remembring also continually the excellency of that ever glorious Crown, prepared for all those who with a true (though weak) endevour, according to grace given, strive for the same with patience, running that race which is set before them, lest with the damned they burn in hell fire for ever. Then to labour with all our might to keep a broken and contrite heart, soft and humbled, not only for the evil we do, but also for that good we should have, and do. Further, to be familiar with God in prayer, labouring so to settle the heart, that we may be more and more acquainted with him. In which we must mark what our disposition is before we pray, what comfort we have in prayer, and how we are disposed after prayer; when, if we find no comfortable presence, or sense of his love, we must look back unto our former actions, since last we received comfort, viewing that *Jonas* causeth this tempest: which sound, we then must never give over, until by a sound repentance we have purged the heart thereof. Lastly, to endeavour (whatsoever

Eph. 3. 17.

Heb. 2. 1. v. 2. 5. 1. 17 Ps. 7. 18. 19

Jonah 1. 8 Titus 2. 13 Idem.

ever the World think) still to keep a sorrowful and lowly heart, longing for *his blessed Majesty*, until he come: when we feel him present, blessing him for the same, and diligently regarding him by faith and a good conscience.

S. *Seing the Lord hath all grace in his own hand, and both biddeth us be holy, as he is holy, and hath power to make us holy; what is the cause that he suffereth his dear Saints to fall sometimes again & again into the same sins which they hate, being sorrowful for them, and desiring earnestly to leave them?*

M. To exercise their faith and repentance, and humble them, lest they should grow proud. To make them loath this present life (in regard of sin) when they behold and feel themselves thus snared against their wills. To long for that life, where they shall never sin any more, but serve their God willingly, perfectly, and constantly for ever and ever.

Job 18. 9

S. *May any one then conclude, that he is under the eternal terror of Gods wrath reprobated, when he feeleth an absence of God, a presence of sin after remorse, and true sorrow, falling into the same sin again.*

Rom. 7. 15. 19. 24.

M. No.

S. *In such an extremity, what must then uphold?*

M. Three things. 1. To look unto that

that which God worketh in us. 2. To look diligently into the nature of God. 3. Unto the examples of the saints.

*S. What should be observed concerning Gods working in us?*

M. First, that seing we consist of divers contrare parts, renewed and unrenewed, that there may be in the renewed a misliking of the evil, that we may say with S. *Paul*, It is no more we, but sin which reigneth in us, doing the evil. So again, the thing which I hate, that do I; and the good thing which I would, that do I not. Next, we must be sure that so often as we fall, we must immediatly flie unto God by repentance, to obtain new remission and pardon, not delaying the time, lest ere we be aware, deadness and hardness of heart steal upon us, seing he who is unfit to day, shall be less fit to morrow; remembring therewithal, lest satan, (who watcheth but an opportunity to drown the soul in perpetual sorrow) suggest some lie or slander upon the truth of God. That the just man (as is written) falleth seven times a day, and riseth again: and that when a sinner repenteth him of his sins, from the bottom of his heart, God will put away all his iniquities out of his sight. And forther, that since he himself (the Law-maker) in in the Gospel hath commanded us, to forgive

Pro. 24. 16. Ezec. 33. & 18. 21.

forgive our brother, not only seven times, but also seventy seven times a day; not to doubt, seeing he is the perfect pattern and fountain of mercy) but that he will put in practice his own Commandment.

Further, we must observe whether the falling into sin bringeth with it a new and more mortal hatred unto the same sin, with new exercises of faith; so that look how fast and often sin assaileth us, we be as busie labouring and thinking of new engines, with which we may resist, destroy and expell the same, resolving by the grace of God never to give over, until we obtain victory over it; with a resolution to fight constantly against it, though God should humble us with such a cross until our last breath; here trying whether yet in this extream sorrowful estate (we have a strong hope) with heavy, low, drowned, stollen sight, that God will one day, in his own good time relieve us: we in the mean time retaining a holy humble jealousie over our selves, altogether relying upon God, and mourning as oft as we are able, for strength against it: chiefly then when we imagine all peace, the power and rage thereof being quite subdued. Then also, we must mark, if our love unto God maketh also our love unto Christ Labefy. 15

Christ Jesus, to grow bold and violent, so that we run into him with all our
Mat. 25. 27 C. 8. 1. 8 might, laying hold of him and his righteousness, for our life with a vehement love (grounded upon his nature) which will not be put back with whatsoever checks. Thus crying unto him continually for a sense and feeling of remission of our sins: (for those unto whom much is forgiven, they love much) it being a most sure token of forgivenness, when our souls are bound, and with a sweet love unto Christ Jesus.

Lastly, we must take heed and be sure that we have this disposition in us, that because we have so often found God so exceeding good, and
Psal. 25. 3. merciful in forgiving us again and again, that if it were possible, although there were no hell, yet for the love of God only, we would abstain from sin, and occasions thereof.

*S. What should we look to in the nature of God?*

Ho. 4. 16. Joa. 3. 16 Ez. 36. 22 Ps. 103. 13. Heb. 12. 10 Psal. 5. Isa. 1. 18 Lu. 17. 3. 4

M. That he is Mercy and Love it self, and through love hath sent Christ to redeem us: and that he looketh not unto our righteousness, but unto his own mercies. That as the pitiful parents tender the good of their children in all chastisements, so doth God in al these crosses procure the good of his Saints. That there be more mer-

mercies in God, than ſins in us. That as he is able to forgive us one ſin, ſo is he able to forgive us many hundred thouſand ſins; even ſo often as he giveth unto us faith and repentance. For the Lord never beſtowed theſe graces upon any, whom he alſo therewith forgiveth not.

*S. What ſhould we have regard unto in the examples of the Saints?*

M. Firſt, look how they have fallen after grace obtained. 2. Conſider how God hath freely forgiven them. 3. Conſider that they not only obtained mercy for themſelves, but that they alſo might be the examples of the mercies of God unto others. *Paul*, he obtained mercy, that Jeſus Chriſt might ſhow upon him all long-ſuffering, for an example unto all ſuch who ſhould in time to come believe unto eternal life. And *Abraham*, his faith was accounted unto him for righteouſneſs; and it is taken not for him only, but alſo for us who believeth in him, who raiſeth up Jeſus our Lord from the dead.

1 Tim. 1. 16

Rom. 4. 23. 24.

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